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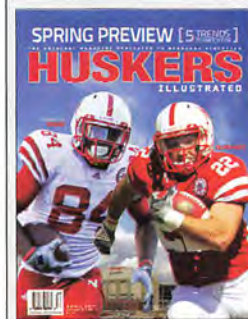
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### ON THE COVER

Senior WR Brandon Kinnie is the top returning receiver for the Nebraska offense, while junior RB Rex Burkhead must lead a stable of talented, but inexperienced running backs. The duo will likely be asked to shoulder a heavy portion of the lifting for the offense this season after the loss of Roy Helu, Jr., Niles Paul and Mike McNeill.

COVER PHOTOS BY AARON BABCOCK

### WALK-OFF

Nebraska Cornhuskers celebrate their victory over UCLA in the twelfth inning when Bryan Peters #7 singles bringing in the winning run home of Tanner Krieteimer #35 from second at Haymarket Park on March 5. Nebraska defeated UCLA 2 to 1 in twelve innings.

PHOTO BY JOHN PETERSON

### NEXT ISSUE

Volume 31, Issue 4, the annual spring preview, will be mailed Monday, April 25. Check for updates at [huskersistructured.com](http://huskersistructured.com).



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TIM BECK

## STAFF RESTRUCTURE

**After an offseason of speculation, Bo Pelini shook up his offensive staff, turning spring practices into a season of change.**

**BY MIKE BABCOCK**

Bo Pelini has four new full-time assistants and two carryover assistants whose roles have changed since last season. In fact, two other returning assistants have altered roles as well. Carl Pelini's title no longer includes defensive line, just defensive coordinator, and John Papuchis, formerly the defensive ends coach, is now responsible for the defensive line and has added

recruiting coordinator to his duties.

The only assistant whose role hasn't changed is assistant head coach and offensive line coach Barney Cotton. And he now has some help with the offensive line, with the addition of John Garrison.

"John and I are doing things now that I had to do by myself and take twice the time," said Cotton.

"We can do more in 5 minutes now than sometimes I could get done in 10 or 12 minutes."

Garrison, a former football intern, is among the staff's four newcomers, along with receivers coach Rich Fisher, linebackers coach Ross Els and defensive backs coach Corey Raymond.

Garrison will work with the tight ends as well as the offensive line.

"You need more eyes up there," Pelini said of the offensive line. "When you have five guys on the offensive front, that's almost

half your group...it just helps."

The other changes on the staff include Tim Beck's promotion to offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach, with Ron Brown, formerly the tight ends coach, to running backs coach.

The changes and hires on offense reflect Pelini's interest in versatility. "Almost to a man, each guy on the staff can coach multiple positions, which gives you a lot of flexibility in practice, how you work with guys, get extra sets of eyes, different sets of eyes



on different position groups," he said.

"There's a lot of flexibility on our offensive staff."

Brown, for example, began his coaching career as a defensive coordinator for a semi-pro team in New Jersey and then coached defensive backs at Brown University, his alma mater, before coming to Nebraska to coach wide receivers and tight ends for Tom Osborne. Beck coached wide receivers at Kansas and outside linebackers at Illinois State (at the beginning of his career), while Pelini considered Fisher, a high school coach the past two seasons, as a linebackers coach when he was Nebraska's defensive coordinator in 2003.

Cotton, who has been an offensive coordinator, "can help with the running game, passing game, a lot of different things, (and) has a pretty extensive background," Pelini said.

## NEW ON STAFF



**JOHN GARRISON**, offensive line-tight ends

**Most recently:** Husker intern

**Replaces:** Ron Brown (Shawn Watson's position on staff)

**Alma mater:** Nebraska

**Junior tight end Ben Cotton says:** "He's a young guy...that sometimes helps, too, where he can

relate to us because he's not that far out of the game. We're comfortable with him."



**RICH FISHER**, wide receivers

**Most recently:** The Rivers School, Weston, Mass., head coach

**Replaces:** Ted Gilmore

**Alma mater:** Colorado

**Bo Pelini:** "I've known 'Fish' for a long time, talked a lot of football with him... outstanding football

coach, great guy, has the right principles, great communicator."



**ROSS ELS**, linebackers

**Most recently:** Ohio, assistant head coach-linebackers

**Replaces:** Mike Ekeler

**Alma mater:** Nebraska-Omaha

**Carl Pelini:** "Ross is a great teacher, as good a teacher as I've been around in this business. Our

backers are really going to thrive under that because I really think he's just going to give them a different perspective."



**COREY RAYMOND**, secondary

**Most recently:** \*Utah, cornerbacks

**Replaces:** Marvin Sanders

**Alma mater:** LSU

**Carl Pelini:** "Corey is a great technician. He really works hard at that, studies that hard and speaks the language of our players very well. He came in

here with an understanding of the scheme already."

\*Hired by Indiana in December 2010

## HI'S TOP 5

# FIVE FOR THE (IMMEDIATE) FUTURE



CHASE ROME

*Spring practice is an opportunity for young players to establish themselves, and not just as back-ups. "You create depth by having your young kids fighting for starting spots," said defensive coordinator Carl Pelini. That applies to offense as well as defense. Though they might not be starting come fall, here are five young players who could contribute during the 2011 season.*

1

**CHASE ROME** (RFr.), DT, 6-3, 295

Worked with the top units as a freshman, emergency back-up, would have played in a pinch

2

**KENNY BELL** (RFr.), WR, 6-1, 180

Among the fastest of the receivers, offensive scout team MVP

3

**COREY COOPER** (RFr.), DB, 6-1, 210

Will push veteran safeties in relation to how quickly he learns the defense

4

**JAMAL TURNER** (Fr.), QB, 6-1, 180

Enrolled early, could also play wide receiver, but quarterback for now

5

**TYLER MOORE** (Fr.), OL, 6-6, 290

Enrolled early, few offensive linemen play without redshirting, but has a chance





## Coordinating the Defense

**T**he most discussed change on Bo Pelini's staff probably has been the promotion of Tim Beck from running backs coach to offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach. But defensive coordinator Carl Pelini's role will be a little different, too, or at least his title will be different.

Previously, Carl Pelini also was listed as defensive line coach. Now John Papuchis, previously listed as defensive ends coach, will

be the defensive line coach – ends and tackles.

And the change isn't just one of semantics. "I'm excited about spending more time with the linebackers and the secondary, all three positions (including the line)," Carl Pelini said.

Last season "I was in all three (position) meetings and oversaw the whole thing," he said. "But I still was down with the defensive line during individual (drills)."

Now, while he'll still

spend time with the line during practice, "my involvement with all three positions will grow, as Bo's involvement on both sides of the football grows," Carl said.

Bo Pelini has begun spending more time with the offense, after focusing primarily on defense when he arrived in 2008. "So I'm excited about that, the expanded role," said Carl. "And I'm ready for it."

So with Bo dividing his attention between offense and defense, will Carl now call the plays on defense?

"That's the agreement," Carl said with a laugh. "We'll see. We'll see."

The defensive play-calling has been a collaborative effort, anyway.

"Especially last year and the year before – maybe not so much the first year – I don't think there was a call made that there wasn't discussion between Bo and I," said Carl.

"We've really grown comfortable with each other, learned to anticipate each other's thoughts and whether I'm signaling . . . I've always signaled it, whether it's coming out of his mouth or my mouth, it's coming after a great deal of discussion between us two. So who knows?"

## SIDELINES

### HOMETOWN CONNECTION

Tim Beck's promotion has given Bo Pelini's coaching staff symmetry, with the head coach and both coordinators all from Cardinal Mooney High School in Youngstown, Ohio.

Beck referred to his hometown in response to a question about how he would deal with the scrutiny and constant analysis to which he'll be subject as offensive coordinator. "Well, I don't know," he said. "All I can say is, you know Bo and Carl and I'm from Youngstown, too, so we'll see how that pans out."

Beck's response requires a little interpretation, but probably not much.

### TAPE STUDY

Among the things Ron Brown did in preparation for his new role as running backs coach is study a videotape of practice drills for running backs put together by former Husker head coach Frank Solich, who also coached running backs on Tom Osborne's staff. Solich not only knows a lot about running backs, he played the position at a high level. He was the first Husker to rush for 200 yards in a game (204 at Air Force, 1965).

### 2011 SCHEDULE

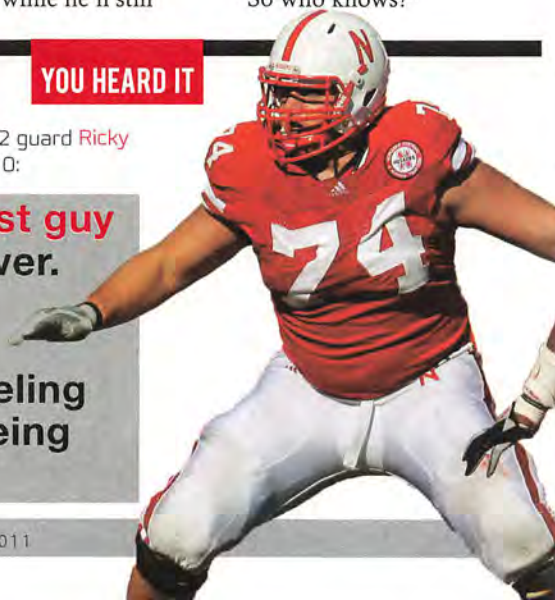
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9/10	FRESNO STATE
9/17	WASHINGTON
9/24	at Wyoming
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10/8	OHIO STATE
10/22	at Minnesota
10/29	MICHIGAN STATE
11/5	NORTHWESTERN
11/12	at Penn State
11/19	at Michigan
11/25	IOWA
12/3	Big Ten Championship

## BARNEY COTTON

Nebraska offensive line coach on All-Big 12 guard **Ricky Henry**, who completed his eligibility in 2010:

**"Ricky is the toughest guy I've ever coached, ever. So I'd like to have somebody step up and challenge my feeling toward somebody being that guy."**

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# FEAR FACTOR

Nebraska looking to overcome fumbled chances

The Huskers fumbled 45 times and lost 16 last season, a concern offensively. New offensive coordinator Tim Beck has said he has a "plan in place" for dealing with fumbling. But "I'm not going to share it because they don't know it yet," he said. "I just think the team's accountable for it, penalties and turnovers."

Nebraska was penalized 109 times for 993 yards in 2010, both school records.

In any case, "we have a plan, and I felt like at some other stops previous in my career, we addressed those issues in this manner, and it really helped them," said Beck.

Without being specific, Beck was asked if the plan dealt with "kind of a technique issue."

The new offensive coordinator's answer showed he has a sense of humor, as well as a sense of timing.

"Not really, no," he replied. "It's kind of a fear issue."

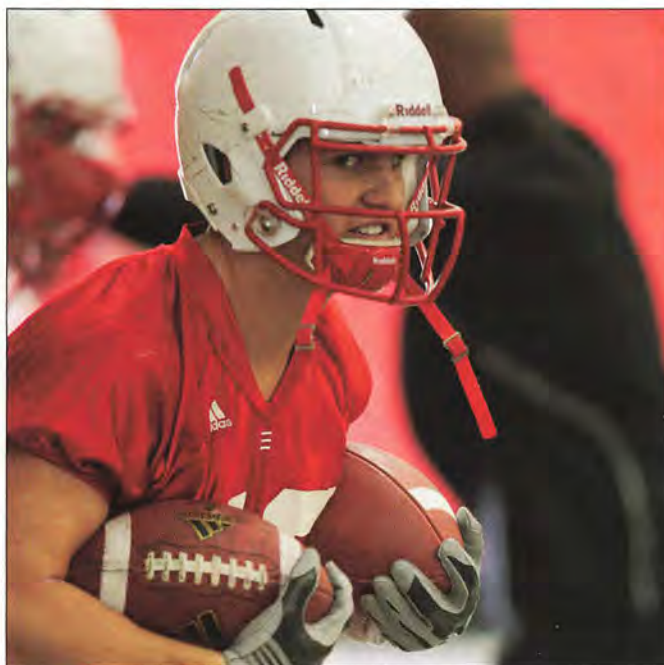


PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK

## NOMOVEFORLAVONTE



Carl Pelini has a wry sense of humor. No doubt about that.

He was asked if he might be able to replace the departed Eric Hagg with linebacker **LAVONTE DAVID** as the hybrid "peso" back in Nebraska's defense.

"Yeh, if I lost my mind," he said after a slight pause.

"Yeh, I could, and he'd probably be really good at it.

But then you're taking one of the best linebackers in the country...and taking him out of the linebacker position."

David, the team's defensive MVP, earned second-team All-America recognition. He also was the Associated Press Big 12 Defensive Newcomer of the Year, the conference coaches Newcomer of the Year and a unanimous first-team All-Big 12 selection, with a school-record 152 tackles

"It'd be nuts to do that," Carl Pelini said of moving him to the "peso" position.

## PERFECT MATCH

The Huskers figure to have three scholarship freshman running backs in the fall: Aaron Green, Ameer Abdullah and Braylon Heard, a high-profile member of the 2010 class who has worked to achieve the necessary standardized test score for eligibility. Their arrival was a factor in Ron Brown's new assignment as running backs coach. "There's three young guys coming in, and Bo and I talked a little bit about where Ron would fit best," new offensive coordinator, and for-

mer running backs coach, Tim Beck said.

"I felt like, as Bo did, here's a young group coming in; they play tailback at the University of Nebraska, which is 'Running Back University' as far as I'm concerned, and what better guy to teach about the legacy of the program, the toughness that it takes to play the position, you know, the integrity, what better coach than Ron Brown? Bringing him into that room, with his experience, for those young guys, to get them ready to play, I think it was a perfect match for him."



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## Meredith among the missing

### JUNIOR DEFENSIVE END

Cameron Meredith and sophomore offensive tackle Jeremiah Sirles, both returning starters, are among those missing spring coming off shoulder surgery. "They both could

probably go through the end of spring, but we're at that point where you want to get them 100 percent," said Bo Pelini.

Others being held out because of injuries include sophomore offensive

lineman Jesse Coffey, senior tight end Jay Martin and junior defensive end Kenny Anderson.

Junior tight end Mychael McClure's career appears to be finished because of concussions.

### END COMPETITION

Pierre Allen has graduated. And Cameron Meredith is being held out of spring practice following shoulder surgery. "You never want to see a guy get hurt, but I think this gives us tremendous opportunity at that defensive end position because we've got some great talent there," defensive coordinator Carl Pelini said.

Those competing for playing time at the position include Jason Ankrah, Josh Williams, Kevin Thomsen and Eric Martin, "all guys who could and probably will be on the field for us at some point next year," said Pelini.

In addition, there are "some other guys, some younger walk-on guys, some younger scholarship

guys," he said. "They're all going to be fighting for that second, third, even first group in some respects."

"I think that position, as much as any other, will be interesting to me how it plays out this spring, and who steps up and who wins the starting spots. And then you throw Cameron back into the mix, who is a very versatile player, could play inside, could play outside, play some stand-up for us...I think it's just great for our depth."

### NO NEPOTISM

Redshirted freshman Jake Cotton has moved from the defensive line to the offensive line, where he's now coached by his dad. "You've got to coach him like the other guys," Barney Cotton said. "His

personality and such, and my relationship is such that it's been a pretty smooth transition."

Being able to coach his son is "absolutely special," he said.

Barney Cotton's son Ben is a junior tight end, of course.

"See, with Ben it was never an issue because Ben doesn't really play for me," Barney said following the third practice of the spring. "Jake plays for me, and so Jake knows he's got to earn it. I would bet you in three days, you could ask those other guys in the room, 'Is anybody getting any special treatment in there?'"

And the answer would be no. "I would think they would say that," Barney said. "I would hope they would."

## SIDELINES

### RUNNING BACK NO MORE

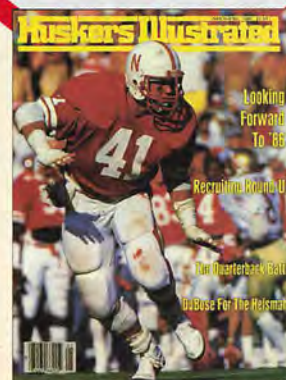
Junior Lester Ward is getting a look at tight end, after playing running back his first two seasons. "We just want to try and find a way... where we can utilize his talents best," said Bo Pelini.

### ANY TIME OF YEAR

No games to look forward to? No problem. Spring practice isn't drudgery to junior tight end Ben Cotton.

"I'm an any-time-of-the-year guy," he said. "Football is obviously going to drag your body down no matter when you do it, and I think it's pretty similar for me, other than not having the heat like you would in fall camp. But I don't mind practicing in the spring. It's nice weather."

# 25 YEARS AGO

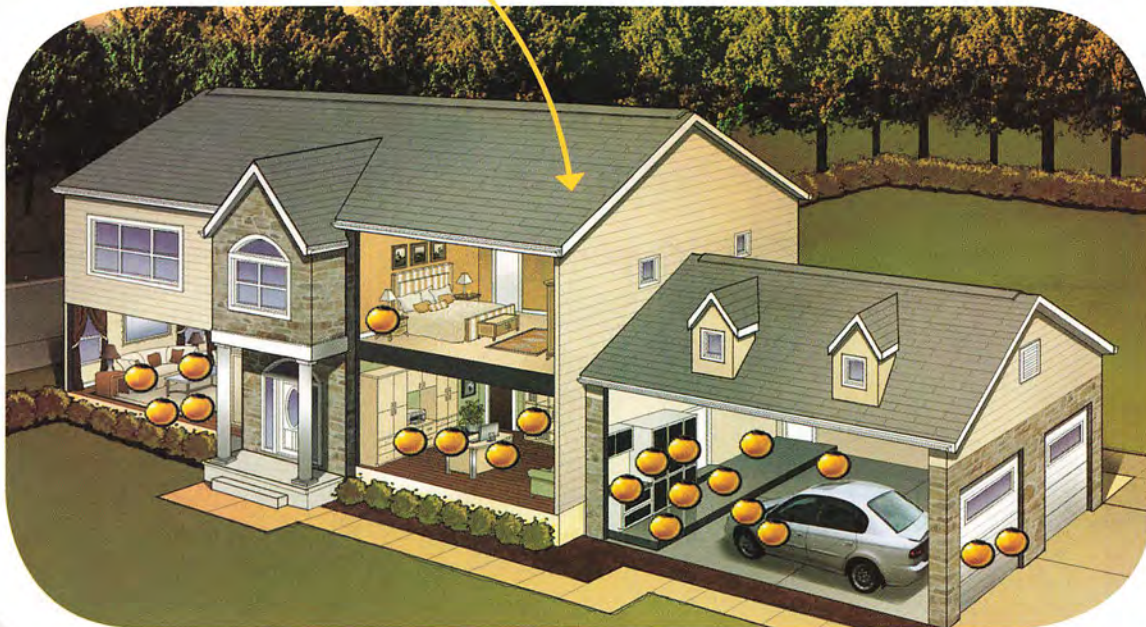


### DUBOSE FOR HEISMAN

Senior linebacker Marc Munford, who would be a first-team All-Big Eight selection for a third consecutive season, was featured on the cover of the Huskers Illustrated spring football edition in 1986. The issue included a story about senior I-back Doug DuBose's Heisman Trophy candidacy. DuBose was the first player in Husker history to rush for 1,000 yards as a sophomore and junior. He was hampered by knee problems and didn't play in the 1986 season, however.



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## Farmer's dream to be a Husker was planted in final game at "The Buck"



**NEBRASKA'S** final game at Buck Beltzer Field couldn't have been scripted any better.

It was the second in a best-of-three NCAA super-regional against Rice. The Huskers had won the first 7-0 behind Shane Komine. And they won the second 9-6, despite trailing 5-3 going into the ninth inning. Jeff Leise's two-run single in the top of the 10th produced what would be the winning runs.

The dramatic victory, Nebraska's 50th of the season, earned the Huskers a first trip to the College World Series and set off a celebration of players and an overflow crowd of nearly 5,500.

The farewell to Buck Beltzer was Husker history in the making. And 10-year-old Kurt Farmer was there to witness it. He had come to the game with his dad, Steve.

"It was so cool," Farmer said looking back at that second day in June 2001. "I loved it."

The significance of the experience can be seen in the No. 10 Husker jersey Farmer now wears. "That was the moment I wanted to come here and play for the Nebraska Huskers," he said.

Actually, that moment might have simply solidified that dream.

"I've always wanted to come here and

play," said Farmer, the first in the history of the Columbus High program to sign to play baseball at Nebraska, according to the Husker media guide.

And baseball has always been Farmer's sport of choice. As his mom Deb tells him, he said, even in the beginning, when playing tee ball, he took the sport more seriously than most. After games, for example, she told him "I would be getting mad at other kids for picking dandelions in the field."

"I was the guy who was always into every pitch."

His commitment to baseball was reflected in his living with a sister in Scottsdale, Ariz., the summer of his junior year in high school so he could play in a Connie Mack League there and in the summer of his senior year playing for the Omaha-based Nebraska Sluggers select team.

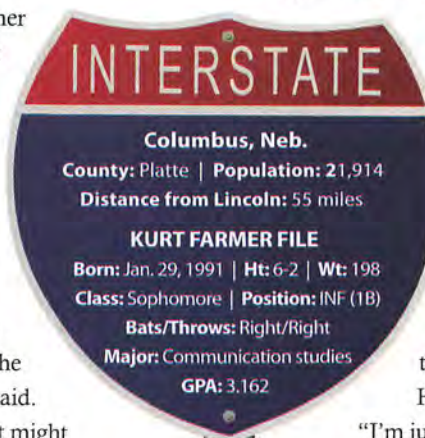
"I just love baseball," Farmer said.

And when he's not playing baseball or going to class, he loves fishing. "I've got my secret spots (near Columbus)," he said. "I don't know if I want to tell anybody."

He smiles and adds:

"I'm just kidding..."

He doesn't offer directions to those spots, however.





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Date	Opponent	Time
Sat, Sept. 3	TN at Chattanooga	TBA
Sat, Sept. 10	Fresno State	TBA
Sat, Sept. 17	Washington	TBA
Sat, Sept. 24	Wyoming	TBA
Sat, Oct. 1	Wisconsin *	TBA
Sat, Oct. 8	Ohio State *	TBA
Sat, Oct. 22	Minnesota *	TBA
Sat, Oct. 29	Michigan State *	TBA
Sat, Nov. 5	Northwestern *	TBA
Sat, Nov. 12	Penn State *	TBA
Sat, Nov. 19	Michigan *	TBA
Fri, Nov. 25	Iowa *	TBA

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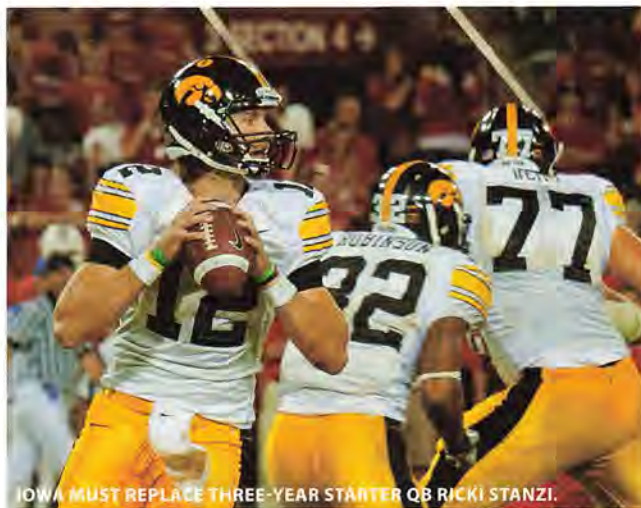
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## THEBIGTENNOTEBOOK

# Camping with the Big Ten

Visit each Big Ten spring camp, as we give a nickle tour of what to expect throughout Nebraska's new conference | TERRY DOUGLASS



IOWA MUST REPLACE THREE-YEAR STARTER QB RICKI STANZI.

## ILLINOIS

**Start:** March 29

**Spring game:** April 23

**2010 Record:** 7-6 (4-4 Big Ten)

It will be rise-and-shine time for Illinois players when they start spring practice this year. To avoid class conflicts, the Illini are scheduled to practice from 7-9:30 a.m., and team spokesman Kent Brown said there's a good chance the morning practice schedule will be carried over to the fall.

The offense will aim to replace star running back Mikel Leshoure. Much of the pressure could fall on the shoulders of quarterback Nathan Scheelhaase, whose success should be helped by the return of four starters on the offensive line.

Illinois expects to return six defensive starters, including three in the secondary with safeties Tavon Wilson and Trulon Henry and cornerback Travon Bellamy. Filling spots at linebacker and on the defensive line rank as top priorities this spring.

## INDIANA

**Started:** March 8

**Spring game:** April 16

**2010 Record:** 5-7 (1-7 Big Ten)

Like fellow Big Ten programs Michigan and Minnesota, who also changed head coaches, Indiana will have plenty of work to do during its 15-practice spring season under first-year coach Kevin Wilson. Included on Wilson's staff is former Nebraska linebackers coach Mike Ekeler, who will serve as co-defensive coordinator.

Wilson, who was the offensive coordinator for Oklahoma, will attempt to install his no-huddle, fast-paced attacking system at Indiana. Unfortunately for Wilson, Indiana record-setting quarterback Ben Chappell completed his eligibility in 2010, leaving Dusty Kiel and Edwin Wright-Baker to compete for the job.

The Hoosiers return 15 starters from last year's team, including seven on offense and

six on defense. Indiana has recorded just one winning record in the past 16 seasons, and that was a 7-6 mark in 2007.

## IOWA

**Started:** March 21

**Spring game:** April 16

**2010 Record:** 8-5 (4-4 Big Ten)

Perhaps no team -- with the possible exception of Ohio State -- was more eager to get its spring season underway than Iowa. The Hawkeyes endured multiple negative off-season headlines, including having 13 players hospitalized following intense off-season workouts. All 13 were expected to participate in spring drills.

A major goal for Iowa this spring will be finding a replacement for quarterback Ricky Stanzi, a three-year starter who passed for 3,004 yards with 25 touchdowns in 2010. Junior James Vandenberg started two games while Stanzi was out with an injury in 2009 but had just eight pass attempts and didn't play in the Hawkeyes' final nine games last season.

Receiver Marvin McNutt, who led Iowa with 53 receptions for 861 yards last season, will miss spring practices after having surgery on his thumb and shoulder.

## MICHIGAN

**Started:** March 19

**Spring game:** April 16

**2010 Record:** 7-6 (3-5 Big Ten)

Installation of new systems will be the focus under new head coach Brady Hoke and his staff,

which includes just one holdover from the Rich Rodriguez era in running backs coach Fred Jackson. Michigan will run a 4-3 defense under new coordinator Greg Mattison.

Hoke brought five assistants with him from San Diego State, including offensive coordinator Al Borges. Under Borges, Michigan is expected to run a more traditional offense, which means the return of fullbacks, tight ends and junior quarterback Denard Robinson -- the 2010 Big Ten offensive player of the year -- taking plenty of snaps from under center.

During his pre-spring news conference, Hoke repeatedly said developing "toughness" will be a major point of emphasis.

## MICHIGAN STATE

**Started:** March 22

**Spring game:** April 30

**2010 Record:** 11-2 (7-1 Big Ten)

Coming off a strong 2010 season, Michigan State will have the luxury of returning a three-year starter at quarterback in Kirk Cousins. The 6-foot-3, 202-pounder was solid as a junior, completing 66.9 percent of his pass attempts for 2,825 yards and 20 TDs with 10 interceptions for a passer rating of 150.68, despite playing with shoulder pain.

The Spartans are expected to return six starters on defense and seven on offense, including a pair of talented running backs in All-Big Ten selection Edwin Baker and Le'Veon Bell. However, Michigan State needs to find three new starters on the offensive line.

Dan Roushar was promoted from offensive line coach to offensive coordinator on Feb. 1. Roushar replaced Don Treadwell, who left to become the head coach at Miami (Ohio).



## MINNESOTA

**Started:** March 24

**Spring game:** April 23

**2010 Record:** 3-9 (2-6 Big Ten)

First-year Minnesota head coach Jerry Kill has his work cut out for him as he and his staff attempt to turn around a program that hasn't won a bowl game since 2004 and hasn't captured a Big Ten Conference championship since 1967. On a positive note, the Golden Gophers return 15 starters from a squad that won its final two games.

An indication of what style of offense Minnesota will run perhaps came when Kill sent his offensive coaching staff to visit his good friend, TCU coach Gary Patterson. Gopher assistants also visited Alabama, Houston and Mississippi State.

Under Kill's direction, Minnesota strength and conditioning coach Eric Klein has staged 6 a.m. workouts four days a week, and the Gophers have been lifting weights five days per week.

## NORTHWESTERN

**Started:** March 7

**Spring game:** April 16

**2010 Record:** 7-6 (3-5 Big Ten)

The ability of quarterback Dan Persa to return from a ruptured Achilles' tendon next fall is obviously critical to Northwestern's hopes for the 2011 season. With Persa at the controls, the Wildcats started 7-3 with the 6-1, 205-pounder passing for 2,581 yards with 15 TDs and only four interceptions. Without Persa, his team dropped its final three games.

With Persa rehabbing his injury during spring drills, Kain Colter, Evan Watkins and Trevor Siemian will all get an opportunity to catch the attention of head coach Pat Fitzgerald.

Tailback Mike Trumpy is



NORTHWESTERN'S PAT FITZGERALD RETURNS 9 OFFENSIVE STARTERS IN 2011.

practicing with a cast on his wrist after breaking a bone in it during his 129-yard, two-TD performance last fall against Illinois.

Northwestern expects to return nine starters on offense and seven on defense next season.

## OHIO STATE

**Starts:** March 31

**Spring game:** April 23

**2010 Record:** 12-1 (7-1 Big Ten)

Ohio State already knew it would be without the services of five players for the first five games of the 2011 season after the NCAA ruled the players, including quarterback Terrelle Pryor, received improper benefits. However, the story got a whole lot more interesting when it was learned head coach Jim Tressel knew about the infractions and failed to notify the NCAA. Originally suspended for two games, Tressel requested that his suspension also be extended to five games.

With Pryor to be among four offensive starters suspended until the Oct. 8 game at Nebraska, Joe Bauserman and incoming freshman Braxton Miller will begin competing for the early-season playing time.

Jaamal Berry and Jordan Hall will be counted on to pick up the slack at running back until starter Dan Herron returns.

## PENN STATE

**Started:** March 18

**Spring game:** April 16

**2010 record:** 7-6 (4-4 Big Ten)

An interesting quarterback competition highlights spring drills as Penn State coaches will oversee a battle between Matt McGloin, Rob Bolden and possibly even freshman Paul Jones. Bolden tried to leave the program after last season, but wasn't given his scholarship release.

After being a finalist for the head coaching job at Pittsburgh, Tom Bradley is back for his 33rd season as a Penn State assistant, including his 12th as defensive coordinator. The Nittany Lions are aiming to improve after allowing 23.9 points per game last season, ranking them 50th nationally in scoring defense.

Penn State expects to return 42 letterwinners, including 16 starters (seven on offense, eight on defense and one on special teams) for the 2011 season.

## PURDUE

**Started:** March 1

**Spring game:** April 9

**2010 record:** 4-8 (2-6 Big Ten)

Purdue's spring-practice objectives should be obvious as the Boilermakers started 4-2 last season but lost their last six games, allowing 34 points or more in five contests. Nine

starters return on defense, but considering what transpired in 2010, personnel changes could be coming.

Known for its prolific passing offense in recent years, Purdue averaged just 150.8 yards per game through the air last season, which ranked 115th nationally. The offense's average of 19.7 points per game was 105th in the country.

Purdue coach Danny Hope added Phil Elmassian to his defensive staff as the new linebackers' coach. Elmassian, who coached the secondary at Nebraska under head coach Bill Callahan from 2004-07, is in his second stint with the Boilermakers having previously been an assistant in West Lafayette, Ind., in 2003.

## WISCONSIN

**Started:** March 22

**Spring game:** April 23

**2010 record:** 11-2 (7-1 Big Ten)

While Wisconsin has plenty of returning talent, the Badgers can certainly use the spring as a time to figure out how to replace standout players such as quarterback Scott Tolzien (21-5 in his two seasons as a starter), offensive linemen Gabe Carimi, who won the Outland Trophy, running back John Clay, tight end Lance Kendricks and All-America defensive end J.J. Watt.

Jon Budmayr is the favorite to win the starting quarterback job next fall. The sophomore has just 10 career passing attempts at the collegiate level.

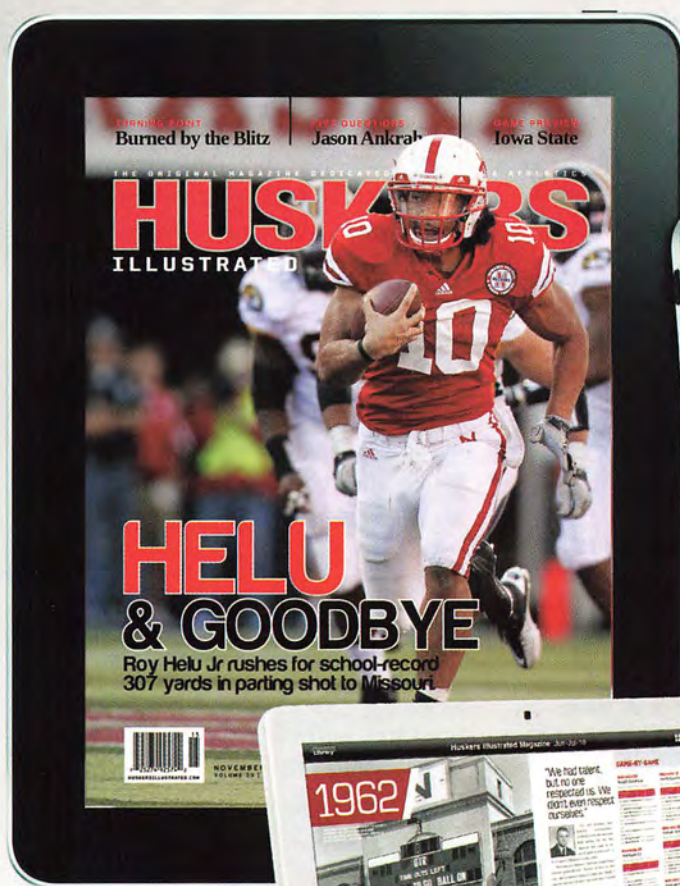
Clay's departure to the NFL shouldn't slow the Badger running game much. Wisconsin's deep and talented backfield, which was just 4 yards shy of boasting three 1,000-yard rushers in 2010, still includes James White (1,052 yards rushing and 14 TDs) and Montee Ball (996 yards and 18 TDs).



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# O-Line in transition after rough finish in 2010

BY CURT MCKEEVER

**NEBRASKA'S POLITE** offensive line coach Barney Cotton can become a bit cantankerous about criticism of the Huskers' 2010 offense that primarily stems from the lack of a ground game in the big games.

Though NU finished the season ranked ninth nationally in rushing – an improvement of 53 spots from the previous year – it's impossible to ignore the 125 yards it had in a loss to Texas. The 164 in a late-November defeat at Texas A&M. The 145 in the Big 12 championship loss to Oklahoma. And the 91 it got in the Holiday Bowl loss to Washington, a team it racked up 383 against while pummeling the Huskies in Seattle the third week of the season.

"There obviously were some things we needed to correct," Cotton said during Nebraska's first week of spring practice. "On the other hand, do you realize that we were only (84) yards from having three 1,000-yard rushers? Even though nobody's happy with how the season finished, there were some pretty good things that happened.

"You're kind of measured on how you finish. I accept that wholeheartedly. But I'm also not going to put my head in the sand and say we didn't do anything good last year."

It's last year's finish, and subsequent changes in the coaching staff, that make Husker fans curious as ever about NU's line. How badly will Nebraska miss first-team All-Big 12 guard Ricky Henry, who Cotton says is the toughest player he's ever coached? And what about replacing Keith Williams, who made 33 starts during his career?

Cotton is pumped not only over sophomores Brent Qvale and Andrew Rodriguez, but also about the addition of former intern John Garrison working full-time with the linemen and tight ends.

"Having two sets of eyes coaching the O-line, and two sets of hands, that's a big deal," he says.

It's likely a bigger deal that the line returns full-time starters in Jeremiah Sirles at left tackle and Mike Caputo at center. Additionally, senior tackles Marcel



**"NU finished the season ranked ninth nationally in rushing... it's impossible to ignore the 125 yards it had in a loss to Texas."**

Jones and Jermarcus Hardrick are experienced enough to where no drop-off is expected replacing starting right tackle D.J. Jones.

The coaches working in the revamped offense of first-year coordinator Tim Beck are preaching simplicity. But don't let that buzz word make you think it's going to be a snap adjustment from what Shawn Watson had the Huskers running. "We're flipping the whole thing on its side, starting over and teaching it a different way," Cotton said. "The huddle's different. The snap count's different. The way we call things. There's not anything the same."

Though Qvale said the coaches have moved quickly in installing their plans, even during the first week of spring ball he felt like things were starting to click. Of course, the trick is to make it click consistently, something that involves a lot of repetition and development. Qvale, for example, came to Nebraska having played in a spread system.

"We passed a lot," he said, pointing out how little time he spent on identifying defensive alignments or learning combination blocking, things that have become critical to his development.

So why did he choose Nebraska?

"I just like hitting people," he added, before providing a not-so-secret hint about the Huskers' new offense. "Nebraska is always going to be a run-first team, and to win games you have to establish the run."

NU did that more times than not last season, just not down the stretch.

Is there an obvious solution to overcoming defenses that are stout regardless of the opponent? Or ones that sell out to try and stop the run?

Not always, though Qvale does cite a basic concept that applies to every situation. "Think and react. Identify, take the right steps and execute," he said. "If you do that, you're going to win." **N**





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## FIVE QUESTIONS

# Jordan Burroughs

*Burroughs cements legacy among Husker greats*

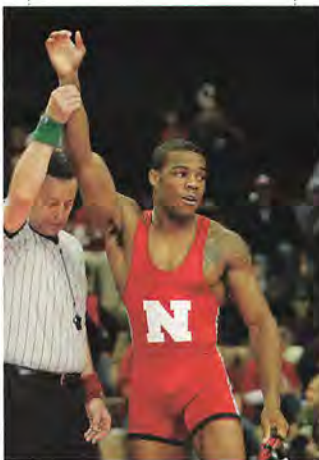
### JORDAN BURROUGHS LOST

his first two matches wrestling for Nebraska as a 149-pound freshman. Five years later, he capped his comeback from major knee surgery by becoming the Huskers' first two-time NCAA champion.

Burroughs capped a 36-0 season at 165 pounds with an 11-3 major decision against Oklahoma's third-ranked Tyler Caldwell, someone he defeated just 2-1 at the Big 12 championships. The match's outcome left him with a 128-20-0 career record that ranks No. 4 at NU for wins.

Burroughs was untouchable in his five matches in Philadelphia, outscoring opponents

71-24 with two technical falls, two major decisions and a default victory. With that performance, he became a top contender for The



Hodge Trophy presented annually to the nation's most outstanding wrestler.

Burroughs was granted a medical hardship that gave him a fifth season of eligibility after his 2009-10 season ended

when he suffered a major knee injury against Central Michigan's Steve Brown. Burroughs went on to finish the match and dropped an overtime decision, which marked his only loss in his last 79 matches of collegiate wrestling.

As a sophomore, he finished third at the NCAA championships, wrestling at 149 pounds, then came back to go 35-0 en route to capturing the 2009 crown at 157 pounds.

Burroughs plans to compete in the U.S. Open in freestyle in early April in Cleveland. He's considered a top contender to make the U.S. World Team this year at 163 pounds.

1

**HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED** How does winning your second NCAA crown compare to your first?

**BURROUGHS:** This one is more of a relief. Once you accomplish a goal like that, anything other than first place would've been a failure for me. Coming back from injury...I went back to the same attitude. There wasn't any pity for myself and any "Just happy to be back."

2

**HI:** Besides having to watch your diet, what's the worst part of being a wrestler?

**BURROUGHS:** The worst part would be the actual training and the way we beat up our bodies. For us, getting a day off doesn't exist.

3

**HI:** What's a talent or interest you have that only those close to you would know about?

**BURROUGHS:** I don't know. I was just competitive at everything I do. Wrestling or seeing who could throw a piece of paper in the trash can, I always like competing. Nothing's just for fun.

4

**HI:** What's the best class you've taken at Nebraska?

**BURROUGHS:** A library course was the easiest class I've ever taken. It was a half-semester and you had to take three tests. We had to go through the library and it was kind of a scavenger hunt. It was a requirement for my sociology major. That was probably the last time I was in the library.

5

**HI:** What would you like to do once you're done wrestling?

**BURROUGHS:** I'm going to continue to compete this year, but after that I'd like to start my own club or coach collegiately. I love kids, but I also like being around the highest level.





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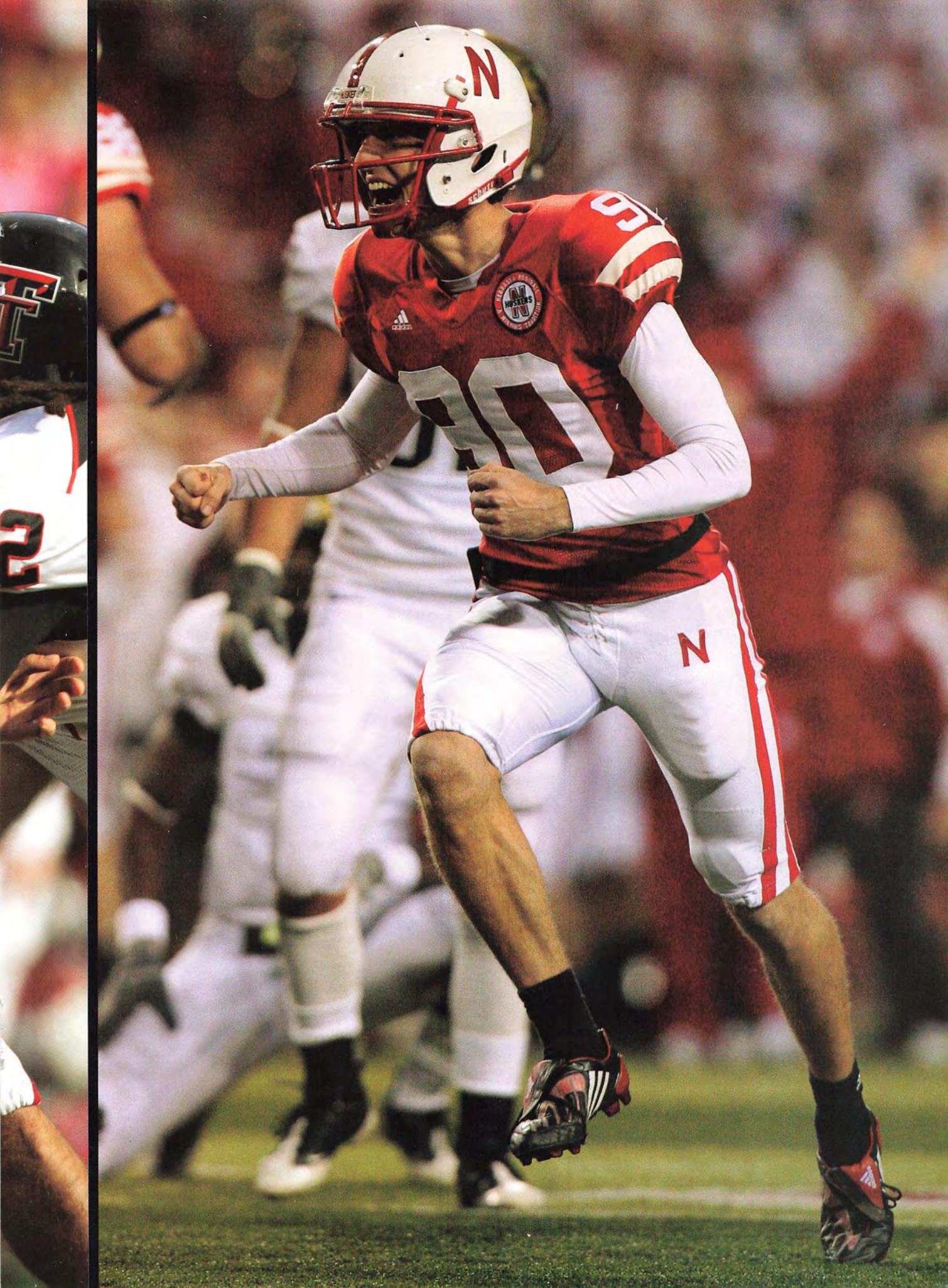
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# SCALED BACK OFFENSE JUST PART OF THE INTRIGUE THIS SPRING

# KEEP IT SIMPLE

by TERRY DOUGLASS

The Nebraska football team's pre-spring news conference in early March was replete with the adjective "simple" in discussing the offense under new coordinator Tim Beck. The word, and variations of it, seemed about as plentiful as points in the Huskers' 51-41 victory at Oklahoma State last season, in fact.

The offensive philosophy will be "very much the same" as the defensive philosophy, said coach Bo Pelini, "multiple but simple, let the players develop a true understanding of what we're doing, not just what you're doing and memorizing what you're doing, but why are you doing it?"

"So then you can react. You can play fast. You can play confident," he said. "I wanted to mirror the philosophy that we have defensively on the

offensive side of the ball."

Points weren't particularly plentiful late in the season, when the Huskers lost three of their final four games, managing only two touchdowns in the three losses.

As a result, Pelini decided to replace Shawn Watson as offensive coordinator.

Beck and the offensive assistants will be doing some "de-programming" of veteran offensive players during the spring, "reduce the verbiage in there, trying to maybe simplify some of the schemes, as well, for the guys and trying to make maybe a little more sense," Beck said.

"My philosophy is, I want our players to understand our offense . . . so I think they need to know why I'm doing what I'm doing and what they're doing and how it fits."

Pelini refused to address specifics of the new offense.

"You've got to be aggressive.

We're going to be an aggressive, attacking style offense, period, end of story," he said.

"And there's a lot of different ways to do that. I'm not going to sit here and get into it and say we're going to do this, we're going to do that. We're going to attack people. We're

going to get after them.

"And we're going to attack them in a lot of different ways."

As for what it will look like? "You'll see that when we roll that ball out there in September," he said.

The new offense and a restructured coaching staff, might be the most discussed subjects this spring, but other significant themes are emerging as well. Here are five, in no particular order of importance.

## DEFENSIVE DEPTH

The defense hasn't been forgotten; quite the contrary. The assumption is that it will be just fine, a reflection of what Bo Pelini has accomplished in three years in charge of the program. Good defense is now a given.

Last season, Nebraska ranked 11th in total defense, ninth in scoring defense, fifth in pass defense and third in pass efficiency defense. Yet defensive Carl Pelini thinks it will be even better.

In fact, the defense is potentially the best the Huskers have had since his brother became head coach. "For sure," the defensive coordinator said. "I mean, we're talented. We've got great leadership. I think we're fast and we're physical. It'll be interesting how it all comes together.

"But I'll never underestimate the importance of chemistry on the defense."

With good chemistry, "we're limitless in terms of how good we could be, I think," he said.

Carl Pelini's optimism about the defense is based on depth, across the board. "I honestly believe this could be our deepest group, at all three levels, for sure in the secondary; obviously, on the defensive line, and then you look at the second level, there's some younger

LAVONTE DAVID





guys who have to step up and start vying for spots."

## HEALTHY TAYLOR?

Interest in quarterback competition during the spring is a given, even with a returning starter, which the Huskers have in sophomore **Taylor Martinez**, who is healthy after being hampered by injuries the second half of last season. With the new offense and coordinator, however, Martinez is starting over, too.

"All the positions are wide-open," said Beck. "Even though I've been here three years, I haven't coached them (quarterbacks), so I don't really know exactly how they're going to take to this (new system). This is different for them because, again, they're not running

plays; they're going to run the offense."

Martinez has plenty of competition, including junior Cody Green, redshirted freshman Brion Carnes and true freshman Jamal Turner, as well as



TAYLORMARTINEZ

sophomore walk-on Ron Kellogg III.

Spano, who's been sidelined by knee problems throughout his career, is listed as a sophomore on the spring roster, after applying for a medical hardship – which had not yet been granted in mid-March.

As for Martinez, "he's been tremendous this off-season," Beck said. "I've been very, very, very pleased with him."

## WHO WILL RUN THE BALL?

When **Rex Burkhead** sat out the final practice (the first in pads) before spring break, the top running backs were junior Collins Okafor and senior walk-on Austin Jones, with junior Lester Ward getting a look at tight end this spring. Okafor and Jones have the opportunity to "stake their claim," said Beck.

"Then next fall, when those other guys get here, it goes to battle again."

Those "other guys" are freshmen Aaron Green, Ameer Abdullah and Braylon Heard, a 2010 recruit who apparently has met the required standardized test score for NCAA eligibility. "They're very talented guys," Beck said. "All three of those guys possess something that we don't have."



REXBURKHEAD

lot easier to have guys who can do that," he said.

Sophomore Ty Kildow, who walked on at wide receiver, also is working at running back this spring.

## WHO WILL CATCH THE BALL?

Count **Brandon Kinnie** among those who appreciate Beck's offensive simplification. "Learning something new is always hard, but he simplified (in order) to learn it as not being as hard," said Kinnie. "So it's good."

"He's just more, like, 'Hey, we're just going to go out and attack people and just have fun doing it.' It's not so structured (as in the past). It's just like, 'Hey, we're just going to play ball.'"

Nebraska's passing game left something to be desired last season. The Huskers ranked No. 113 in passing offense, averaging barely 150 yards per game. Kinnie was the leading receiver, with 44 catches for 494 yards and five touchdowns. Tight end Kyler Reed was third, with 22 catches for 395 yards and eight touchdowns.

But Niles Paul and Mike McNeill must be replaced.

Among the young players who figure in the competition are sophomores



BRANDONKINNIE

Quincy Enunwa, who saw limited action last season as a true freshman, and Stanley Jean-Baptiste and redshirted freshmen Kenny Bell.

Jean-Baptiste, yet another transfer from

Fort Scott (Kan.) Community College, and Bell are among the team's fastest receivers, according to Kinnie. "Pretty much, yeh," he said.

## HOW THEY WILL LINE UP

Three interior offensive linemen with starting experience return: center Mike Caputo and tackles Jeremiah Sirles and Marcel Jones, who missed much of last season because of a back injury. Sirles is coming off shoulder surgery and will miss all of spring practice.

Guards Keith Williams and Ricky Henry and tackle D.J. Jones, all starters last season, must be replaced. "I think you can tell that we've got some good young talent, and in some other respects, you can tell how awful young and inexperienced we are," said offensive line coach Barney Cotton.

"So we've got some guys that we've liked and still like after the recruiting process, but there's a lot of learning to take place because there's not many snaps in those guys' banks. We've got to really have a physical, high-volume spring for all our inexperienced guys so that they can become more veteran-like."

Among those youngsters are sophomores Andrew Rodriguez, who played without redshirting, Brent Qvale and Cole Pensick, as well as freshman Tyler Moore, who enrolled early. "We've got 12 practices and 29 (in the fall), 41 practices left to become less youthful," Cotton said after the final practice before spring break.

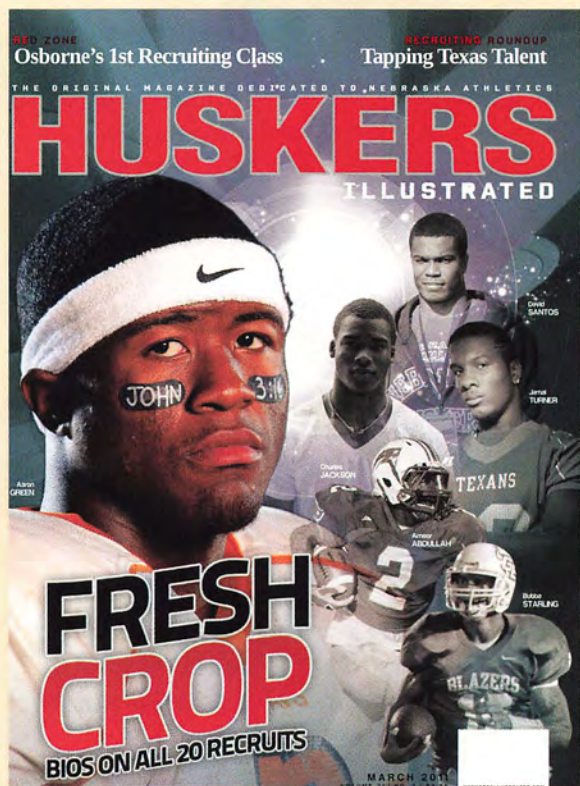
Senior Yoshi Hardrick and junior Brandon Thompson also are among those in the mix.



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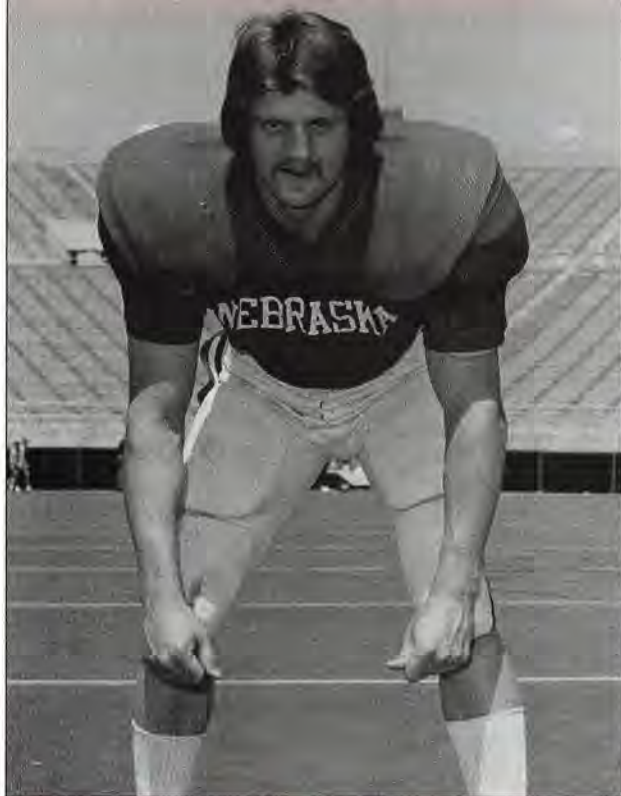
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# Dave Redding

*Dave “Red Man” Redding walks into sunset after winning a **Super Bowl** ring with Green Bay Packers coaching staff.*

While Dave “Red Man” Redding describes himself as a marginal athlete, he can’t imagine growing up with any more football passion than he had.

“Everybody’s gotta have a dream, and mine was to play for Nebraska and for the Green Bay Packers,” Redding said shortly after retiring from football Feb. 21 after spending 24 seasons in the National Football League as a strength and conditioning coach.

Redding realized the first part of his dream. The son of the late legendary North Platte (Neb.) High School football coach George “Crumph” Redding, he lettered three seasons as a Husker defensive end in 1973, ’74 and ’75 – Tom Osborne’s first three years

as Nebraska’s head coach.

The second part of “Red Man’s” dream turned out OK, too. After all, Redding walks into football’s sunset at 58 with a Super Bowl ring on his hand, courtesy of a two-year stint with old friend Mike McCarthy, who hired him with the Green Bay Packers.

McCarthy credited Redding with putting the strength and conditioning program in place that helped produce Green Bay’s 2011 Super Bowl championship, and that was enough for “Red Man” to believe that he really did achieve both parts of his childhood dream.

“Man, when I was in grade school and Nebraska lost on Saturday and Green Bay lost on Sunday, I was a mess,” Redding recalled.

## CATCHING UP WITH BY RANDY YORK

“I could hardly make it to school. I was obsessed with those two football teams.”

To end his career in Green Bay was pretty unusual. “What that city is and represents is so much different than the rest of the NFL,” said Redding, who also coached for the San Diego Chargers (2002-06), the Washington Redskins (2001), the Kansas City Chiefs (1989-97) and the Cleveland Browns (1982-88), where he was the first strength coach in franchise history.

Redding was also the first strength coach for a Washington State team that upset Nebraska in Lincoln in 1977 and the first strength coach for a Missouri team that upset the Huskers in Lincoln in ’78. No wonder McCarthy, the head coach of the reigning Super Bowl champions, calls Redding a “pioneer” in his field.

Red Man’s experience in Green Bay reminded him of his experience in Lincoln. “In Nebraska, there’s corn, there’s cattle and there’s the Huskers,” he said. “In Green Bay, there’s cheese, there’s beer and there’s the Packers. In both places, football is the show. That’s it. It’s what the whole town thinks about all year long.”

Interestingly, both metropolitan area cities are similar in terms of population, passion and

**“When I was in grade school and Nebraska lost on Saturday and Green Bay lost on Sunday, I was a mess.”**

persistence.

“I really idolized Vince Lombardi and Bob Devaney,” Redding said. “Lombardi reminded me of my dad – same style, same personality. Devaney recruited me. He even tried to hire my dad to be on his coaching staff, but my dad couldn’t afford to do it.”

Redding will never forget when the late Jim Ross offered him a football scholarship after he seemed to favor an anticipated appointment to the United States Air Force Academy. “We were having a hamburger at the Holiday Inn in North Platte, and Coach Ross asked me what I thought about becoming a Cornhusker,” Redding recalled. “I am not kidding. The second he said that, I reached across the table, grabbed the pen out of his hand and signed that letter before he had a chance to change his mind.”



# IN THE RedZone



OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR TIM BECK

## Pelini makes a change

**Y**es, there were other candidates to replace Shawn Watson as offensive coordinator. Although Bo Pelini didn't offer any names, "you consider all your options," he said.

The bottom line is, "you've got to go with what you feel is going to be the best thing for your football team, and it just kept coming back to the same guy," said Pelini.

That guy was Tim Beck, the Huskers' running backs coach the past three seasons.

"I have a great level of trust, a great level of confidence in Tim," Pelini said.

"We're very much on the same page philosophically, what we want to do, where we are and what we're going to do going forward, and it was a pretty easy choice for me."

Beck's coaching resume includes one season as offensive coordinator at Missouri State (1998) and one season as pass game coordinator at Kansas (2007), where he was also the wide receivers coach for three seasons.

Beck, like Bo Pelini and defensive coordinator Carl Pelini, is from Youngstown, Ohio, and a graduate of Cardinal Mooney High School,



one of many influences on his coaching philosophy. He also was a successful high school coach in both Arizona (1993-95) and Texas (1999-2000).

"I've picked up pieces everywhere, believe it or not," Beck said of what has shaped his approach to offense. "I mean, defensively probably as much or more so than offensively. I think the best offensive minds come from defensive coaches because they know what hurts them (offenses).

"Obviously, growing up and playing at Cardinal Mooney was a big influence in terms of how the game's expected to be played and about winning. And I think just throughout, learning from different people, from high school coaches to college coaches to watching games growing up as a kid. I've picked plays off Monday Night Football and drew them up off the VCR and ran them. So it just comes from everywhere, a little bit."

Nebraska's late-season offensive struggles a year ago are well-documented. The Huskers finished the season ranked 44th nationally in total offense (398.14) and 39th in scoring (30.86).

"'Wats' (Watson) is a tremendous football coach, smart, intelligent, good teacher, all those things," said Pelini. "But what I felt needed changed was the (offensive) system. You just get to a certain point where I felt like a change was needed, what's in the best interest of the program, of changing out the system, bringing in some fresh ideas, a whole new system, and do it going forward. And I thought this was the right time to do it.

"I wouldn't have done it if I didn't feel it was in the best interest of the program."



## Wearing the O.C. Title

Tom Osborne began meeting with the Husker quarterbacks in 1969, after Bob Devaney gave him the responsibility of revamping the offense. Officially, however, Osborne's title was ends coach. Devaney never identified a quarterbacks coach nor did he designate an offensive (or defensive) coordinator.

When Osborne succeeded Devaney in 1973, he gave Monte Kiffin the title of defensive coordinator but continued to coach the quarterbacks and coordinate the offense. Osborne never gave up coordinator duties. It was his particular passion, though he did hire Turner Gill as quarterbacks coach in 1992.

Frank Solich followed Osborne's lead, coordinating the offense – with Gill as quarterbacks coach – until restructuring his staff after the Huskers went 7-7 in 2002. Barney Cotton was brought in to coordinate the offense as well as coach the offensive line.

### NU OFFENSIVE COORDINATORS

**1973-97**

No title, Tom Osborne

**1973-91**

No title, Tom Osborne (QBs also)

**1992-97**

QBs Turner Gill

**1998-02**

No title, Frank Solich (QBs Gill)

**2003**

Barney Cotton (QBs Gill)

**2004-06**

Jay Norvell (QBs also)

**2007-10**

Shawn Watson (QBs also)

**2011**

Tim Beck (QBs also)



# Sights on new targets

*Louisiana corner boasts bevy of offers, lists Nebraska among his top four schools* | 247SPORTS.COM

HEAD COACH BO PELINI AND HIS STAFF HAVE ALREADY IDENTIFIED KEY TALENT FOR THE 2012 CLASS.



New Orleans (La.) O.P. Walker is a talented program in the heart of the talented southern Louisiana region. It is always a popular destination for college coaches but over the past four years, it has been even more of a regular stop with the emergence of **ANTHONY JOHNSON**, one of the top defensive tackles in the country in 2011.

During those frequent visits from coaches, another prospect caught coaches' eyes out of the class of 2012 and now that prospect, **DWAYNE THOMAS** is ready to emerge into the spotlight.

Thomas is a 6-1, 175-pound cornerback with big play ability and the versatility to line up at either safety or cornerback. According to his head coach, Emmanuel Powell, Thomas has now picked up 12 verbal offers heading

into his junior spring. Along with Nebraska, the list consists of LSU, Arizona, Pittsburgh, Minnesota, ULL, ULM, Southern Miss, SMU, Southern, Tulane and Utah.

"I would have to say my top four is LSU, Nebraska, Arizona and Pittsburgh," Thomas said. "I talk to them a lot. I get a lot of hand written letters from them. They're backing their talk up. They connect like they're supposed to. I like for them to if they really want me, to come get me."

Along with his 12 offers, Thomas is also hearing from Alabama, Auburn, Miami, Kentucky, Texas A&M, Ole Miss and others.

"Frank [Wilson] was like I'm going to be at LSU," he said. "Your offer is here. I'm going to get you up here and you're going to play with Anthony Johnson. With Nebraska,

they were like 'you're number one on our board. I want you bad.' Everybody else has just been mailing and facebooking like crazy."

As Thomas begins to evaluate the recruiting process there are a couple of factors that he will be taking a close look at.

"Education is going to be first for me," said Thomas, who sports a 3.3 GPA. "Class wise, how am I going to get help. I'm going to come out there and work hard. I'll fight for my position. I like to compete. If ya'll have talent out there and you're bringing in other guys as well, I'll be like, 'that's good'."

But Thomas wants an opportunity to play.

## In the house for NU's Spring Game?

As of press time Nebraska was expecting six recruits to attend the Red-White Spring game, including three offensive line targets – **ANDRUS PEAT** of Tempe, Ariz. (Corona Del Sol), **RONNIE STANLEY** of Las Vegas (Bishop Gorman) and **PAUL THURSTON** of Arvada, Colo. (West).

Defensive ends **TROY HINDS** of Kaysville, Utah (Davis) and **GREG MCMULLEN** of Akron, Ohio (Hoban) also plan

to attend the game.

Nebraska's lone commit of the 2012 class linebacker Michael Rose of Kansas City, Mo. (Rockhurst) has also indicated his plans to attend.

## Nebraska offers one of Nevada's best

OL **RONNIE STANLEY** from Bishop Gorman High in Las Vegas, NV, could be the best player on the West Coast not many are familiar with. Part of the reason for that is his teammate **JALEN GRIMBLE**, who signed with Miami, got most of the attention at Bishop Gorman.

But Stanley does have more than nine offers from schools like USC, California, Arkansas, Arizona, Nebraska, Utah and others.

He recently attended Arizona's Jr. Day and will visit USC later this month.

## Nebraska makes play for Midwest WR

Nebraska has extended an offer to the state of Illinois' top receiver prospect, **JORDAN WESTERKAMP**, the Lombard (Ill.) Montini Catholic standout confirmed with 247Sports.

The Huskers join the likes of Boston College, Cincinnati, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan State, Minnesota, Northwestern, Purdue and West Virginia in offering the 6-foot-1, 190-pound Westerkamp.

This past fall, Westerkamp caught 89 passes for 1,631 yards and 21 touchdowns to give him 140 receptions for 2,687 yards and 37 scores for his career.



Westerkamp claims no favorites at this point in the recruiting process. He's been making the rounds as of late, taking several trips to places like Illinois, Northwestern, Indiana, Purdue, Cincinnati, Michigan State and Wisconsin. In the near future, Westerkamp plans to visit a lot of those schools again, as well as Vanderbilt, Tennessee, Boston College and West Virginia.

### McMullen receives Nebraska offer

Two weeks ago, Future247\*\* defensive end **GREG MCMULLEN** from Hoban High School in Akron, Ohio, has received an offer from the Husker coaching staff.

"Nebraska has some good young coaches that know what they're doing, and Bo Pelini's a great guy. They've also had tremendous success lately when it comes to their defense.

The 2011 first-team all-state selection is intent on receiving the best education possible in return for his athletic gifts.

The coveted defensive end also has verbal offers from Cincinnati, Michigan State, Notre Dame, Ohio State and Purdue and is currently favoring the Buckeyes, Huskers and the Irish.

"Ohio State is mostly because I'm from Ohio, so I'd be close to my home and my

family," McMullen said. "Everyone would be able to come see me when they wanted, and I'd be able to see them. They also have a good program.

The Irish could have another chance to impress McMullen if the Akron standout makes a return trip to South Bend this spring.

"I'm going to try and go to at least two of the Spring Games out of my top three," McMullen said. "I should know which ones I'll be going to within the next two weeks."

"Academics and my comfort level will be the two most important things for me," McMullen said. "If I'm not comfortable with the coaches or the area, then I won't be satisfied with going to that place. I'm not one of those guys that's going to want to go to Auburn because they won the National Championship because they don't have great academics. I'll be taking my education very seriously."

McMullen had an excellent junior season for the 4-6 Knights, recording 50 tackles and leading his team in sacks with nine-and-a-half.

"I'm a very balanced defensive end," McMullen said. "I can stop the run just as well as I can get after the quarterback. I'm not one of those guys you have to sub in and out depending on the down and distance."

### Top OL plans return trip to Auburn

With 30 offers to his credit, including Nebraska, **TY DARLINGTON** has his choice of most of the nation's top college football programs.

While the standout offensive guard from Apopka (Fla.) High School has yet to officially narrow his list, several schools stand.

"I'm not naming any top schools or whatever but Auburn is definitely toward the very top of the list," Darlington said. "They've done some great things this year but besides that I really liked their coaches even before they went on the run they did.

"I really liked the feel there and want to get up and see it again."

Darlington, who unofficially visited Auburn last summer, plans to return on Apr. 16 for the spring game. He communicates with Auburn offensive line coach Jeff Grimes on a weekly basis.

Darlington recently attended Junior Days at Florida and Miami. He has a lot of family in Oklahoma and the Sooners are also expected to be finalists.

**\*\* A Future247 recruit refers to a top prospect that will be ranked amongst the top 247 2012 prospects when the full list is created on 247Sports.com.**





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# BLEEDING RED

BY TIM SIEDELL

## NEXT YEAR

"Next year."

Adults love to say that. It flows out of their mouths as easily as "next month" or "next weekend" or "what's a Justin Bieber?" And they mean it. Because as you get older, the years keep feeling shorter. Until one day you realize you're digging around in the boxes under the stairs and you can't remember if you're getting the Christmas lights out or putting them away.

But it's different as a kid. To a kid, a year is an eternity. Heck, the time between Halloween and Christmas is an eternity. A full year means your best friend moves away, you shoot up three inches, you no longer fit into any of your clothes, and your home life is turned upside down with the addition of a baby sister. No, a year is practically unfathomable for the average elementary school kid.

Especially this average kid, growing up in Lincoln in the late 1970s and early '80s. "Next year" meant the Huskers had broken my heart. Again.

Know that look an African lion has after eating an entire gazelle and then basking on a hot rock in the afternoon sun? (Just pretend and nod in agreement.) That's the look my grandfathers, uncles, and dad had in those days. They had feasted on the dreaded Sooners in the Game

of the Century. The crimson blood of Bear Bryant's undefeated 1971 team still stained their toothy smiles. "Next year" rolled especially easily off their satisfied lips.

Oh, I was there for those games. Probably propped up in a car seat in front of the silent television, the sound turned down so my father could tape the Lyell Bremser call on a cassette player held up to the radio. You can hear me gurgle and coo a few times in the background. I was a baby lion watching and learning how to feast.

By the time I was fully emotionally invested in Husker football, the t-shirts and sweatshirts and posters and tin

coasters and commemorative beer steins associated with a back-to-back national championship seemed like ancient relics from a lost civilization. Even the official mascot logo had changed. The thin and hungry superfan character with the red blazer and Husker flag was replaced by a fat and happy Herbie Husker flashing a contented "okay" sign.

But the "next years" kept rolling by. Between 1972 and 1980 (843 kid years), Nebraska never went back to the national championship game, alternating between heart-destroying losses in the last week of the season and head-scratching upset losses to the likes of Iowa State and Washington State. (The latter taking place during the opening week of the season, thus marking the earliest "next year" in my young life.)

**"The crimson blood of Bear Bryant's undefeated 1971 team still stained their toothy smiles."**

The '80s brought a new level of pain into the equation. There was the "Why Is William Perry Allowed To Hug Dave Rimington?" national title game at the end of the 1981 season, the "Worst Officiating Call In History To Screw Nebraska Out Of A National Title" game at Penn State in 1982, and the famous "Let's Go For Two And Not Kick The Easy PAT Just To Spite Tim Siedell"

game against Miami in the Orange Bowl. By my count, I was denied four straight national championships in the prime of my youth.

And let's not forget the Sooner Magic that resulted in the most painful moments of my young life not involving girls or pull-ups in front of the entire gym class. I was there when Oklahoma used an actual fire engine, live bear, and the Good-year blimp to score five touchdowns in the final three seconds for a come-from-behind victory. As Barry Switzer stepped into the blimp at the end of the game and flew off into the sky, mooning the crowd, my dad turned to me and said "next year."

At least that's how I remember it.

Of course, three national championships in four years will soothe many an old wound. But by 1994, I was an adult. Complete with a wife, a house, and storage space under the stairs for Christmas lights. By then, losses ruined my week, not the entire year.

Today, it's more like an afternoon. I guess that's part of growing up.

But even now, as we prepare for the start of another promise-filled season, I can't help but think back to those close calls and brutally long off-seasons of my youth. And deep down I know, right this very minute, there's an NCAA committee conducting a review of that out-of-bounds "catch" during Penn State's final drive. I expect the play, the game, and the 1982 national championship to be reversed very soon. If not, maybe next year.

*"Tim Siedell (pictured above between his brother and Wonder Monds) is a writer and humorist whose first book, "Marching Bands Are Just Homeless Orchestras" is available now through Amazon.*

*Follow him on Twitter: @badbanana.*



# Huskers' tourney bubble pops after win over No. 3 Longhorns

*Nebraska loses five of six final games after win over Texas; misses NCAA Tournament* | BRIAN ROSENTHAL



DOC SADLER

PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK

## ALL SEEMED GOOD WITH NEBRASKA BASKETBALL ON FEB. 19.

The Huskers had just won their third straight game to reach the .500 mark in Big 12 Conference games. The opponent that day? Big, bad Texas – a Longhorn team that had been undefeated and ranked No. 3 nationally.

The college hoops world took notice of the Huskers' 70-67 victory. Nebraska was the lead story on ESPN's SportsCenter. Doc Sadler granted a handful of interview requests with national radio talk shows. Suddenly, the Huskers were in serious conversation for

the NCAA Tournament.

A month later, Sadler was addressing media in a small room at Koch Arena in Wichita, Kan., where the Huskers bowed out of the first round of the National Invitation Tournament with an uninspiring 76-49 loss to Wichita State.

"Their team played like it was a one-and-done deal," Sadler said of the Shockers. "My team didn't."

In fact, the Huskers didn't play like a team with anything at stake after that monumental victory over Texas. They lost five of

their last six games and held the lead for a combined 5 minutes, 46 seconds over their final three games.

The loss to Wichita State was Nebraska's most lopsided of the season. Before that game, Nebraska hadn't trailed by more than 20 points in a game all season.

What happened?

That's what Sadler is trying to figure out at the end of his fifth season as Nebraska's head coach.

"When you put yourself in a position like we did after the Texas game, the urgency, instead of picking up . . . maybe it's because we've never been in that position," Sadler said. "I don't know. Who knows what the reason? But the fact of the matter is, it hasn't happened."

Nebraska finished 2-11 in games away from Lincoln, and won only one true road game – by one point at Oklahoma.

"At some point, you've got to step up and win some road games," Sadler said, "and we've not shown the toughness all year to do that."

Nebraska finished 19-13 overall, and 7-9 in the Big 12 Conference – both improvements from the previous season, but not the bottom-line result many

## JETER HONORED

Senior Lance Jeter earned third-team All-Big 12 honors by the league coaches and also was selected to the U.S. Basketball Writers Association All-District VI team.

The 10-member District VI team consists of players in a seven-state region that includes Nebraska, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Oklahoma.

Jeter, 6-foot-3 point guard from Beaver Falls, Pa., led Nebraska in scoring at 11.6 points per game and ranked among the Big 12 leaders in assists (4.6, fourth), steals (1.7, fifth) and assist-to-turnover ratio (2.3-to-1, second).

Jeter had 145 assists to tie Jack Moore for sixth on Nebraska's single-season assist list. He also became the first Husker since Cookie Belcher to lead the team in both scoring and assists in the same season.

## NU WOMEN READY TO HEAL

Let the healing process begin for the Nebraska women's basketball team – literally.

The Huskers closed an injury-riddled season with a hard-fought first-round loss to Iowa State in the Big 12 Tournament.

One year after winning the Big 12 Conference, earning a No. 1 seed and advancing to the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament, the Huskers finished 13-18 overall and in last place in the Big 12.

Of course, Nebraska played most of the season without injured senior guard Dominique Kelley. Two other Huskers – junior forward Harleen Sidhu and sophomore forward Meghin Williams – were scheduled for off-season surgeries. And guard Kellie McCann-Smith will be held back in the off-season after her freshman season was cut short because of a back injury.

"We have to recruit better, and (have better) health," Nebraska coach Connie Yori said. "If we were healthier, we would have had a better season. I know that's part of the game, but we got hit hard. I've had teams where for a period of time you're playing with six and seven kids, but never like we had to for most of this season."

One player who didn't succumb to injury was sophomore guard Lindsay Moore, who played a school-record 1,164 minutes.



## 2010-11 MBB Schedule

NOV 03	PERU STATE (EXH.)	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 75-43
NOV 08	BELLEVUE (EXH.)	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 82-58
NOV 12	SOUTH DAKOTA	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 76-68
NOV 15	ARK.-PINE BLUFF	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 83-40

### PUERTO RICO TIP-OFF

NOV 18	VANDERBILT	AT SAN JUAN, P.R.	L, 59-49
NOV 19	DAVIDSON	AT SAN JUAN, P.R.	L, 70-67
NOV 21	HOFSTRA	AT SAN JUAN, P.R.	W, 62-47

NOV 27	USC	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 60-58
DEC 01	JACKSON STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 76-57
DEC 05	CREIGHTON	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 59-54
DEC 08	ALCORN STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 78-57
DEC 11	TCU	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 70-56
DEC 18	EASTERN WASH.	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 72-42
DEC 21	GRAMBLING	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 79-39
JAN 03	NORTH DAKOTA	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 77-46
JAN 05	SAVANNAH STATE	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 68-48
JAN 08	IOWA STATE *	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 63-62
JAN 12	MISSOURI *	AT COLUMBIA, MO.	L, 77-69
JAN 15	KANSAS *	AT LAWRENCE, KAN.	L, 63-60
JAN 18	COLORADO *	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 79-67
JAN 22	TEXAS TECH *	AT LUBBOCK, TEXAS	L, 72-71
JAN 29	TEXAS A&M *	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 57-48
FEB 02	KANSAS STATE *	AT MANHATTAN, KAN.	L, 69-53
FEB 05	KANSAS *	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 86-66
FEB 09	BAYLOR *	AT WACO, TEXAS	L, 74-70
FEB 12	OKLAHOMA STATE *	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 65-54
FEB 16	OKLAHOMA *	AT NORMAN, OKLA.	W, 59-58
FEB 19	TEXAS *	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 70-67
FEB 23	KANSAS STATE *	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 61-57
FEB 26	IOWA STATE *	AT AMES, IOWA	L, 83-82 (OT)
MAR 01	MISSOURI *	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 69-58
MAR 05	COLORADO *	AT BOULDER, COLO.	L, 67-57
MAR 09	OKLAHOMA STATE ^	AT KANSAS CITY	L, 53-52
MAR 16	WICHITA STATE #	AT WICHITA, KAN.	L, 76-49

\* BIG 12 CONFERENCE GAME  
# NIT

^ PHILLIPS 66 BIG 12 TOURNAMENT



**STUDENTS CELEBRATE  
AFTER KNOCKING  
OFF NO. 3 TEXAS**

PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN

expected after the fifth season of the Sadler regime. Nebraska is still without an NCAA Tournament appearance since 1998.

Not that the Huskers didn't have their chances this season. They were 2-3 in one-point games, with two of those losses coming in the final two weeks of the season.

"When there's some adversity, we haven't learned how to fight through that," Sadler said. "I've got to get us back to being a lot tougher mentally."

Nebraska loses one starter in senior point guard Lance Jeter, who led the team in scoring, assists and steals. Finding a replacement for Jeter will be near the top of Sadler's to-do list entering the 2011-12 season. Walk-on Bo Spencer, who sat out this season after transferring from LSU, will be in that mix, but Sadler is also on the recruiting trail for a junior college guard.

The Huskers also signed point guard Corey Hilliard of Raytown, Mo. He joins forwards Josiah Moore of Norcross, Ga., and David Rivers of Little Rock, Ark., as incoming freshmen next season.

Moore and Rivers led their high schools to state championships. Rivers was named the MVP of the Arkansas Class 7A state tournament.

### Sadler gets extension

Saying that Nebraska's program is on the right track, Nebraska athletic director Tom Osborne rewarded Doc Sadler with a two-year contract extension.

Details of the new contract, which runs through June 30, 2016, will be announced at a later date.

Sadler has a record of 89-71 in five seasons at Nebraska, including 30-50 in Big 12 Conference play. Nebraska begins play next season in the Big Ten Conference. He's led the Huskers to three post-season appearances, all in the National Invitation Tournament.

Osborne said Sadler has run a program with integrity and that new facilities and a large returning roster are signs of a bright future.

"I think the one thing that goes largely unnoticed is that Doc does it the right way," Osborne said. "In basketball -- I don't want to accuse people of cheating, but there are lots of things where you cut a few corners, there's a few gray areas. Doc, as far as I know, has never done that."

"You get a guy that works hard, knows the game and won't cut corners, you better stick with that guy."



# Around <sup>THE</sup> Horn

| CURT MCKEEVER

THIS ISSUE BASEBALL SOFTBALL GYMNASTICS TRACK AND FIELD BOWLING

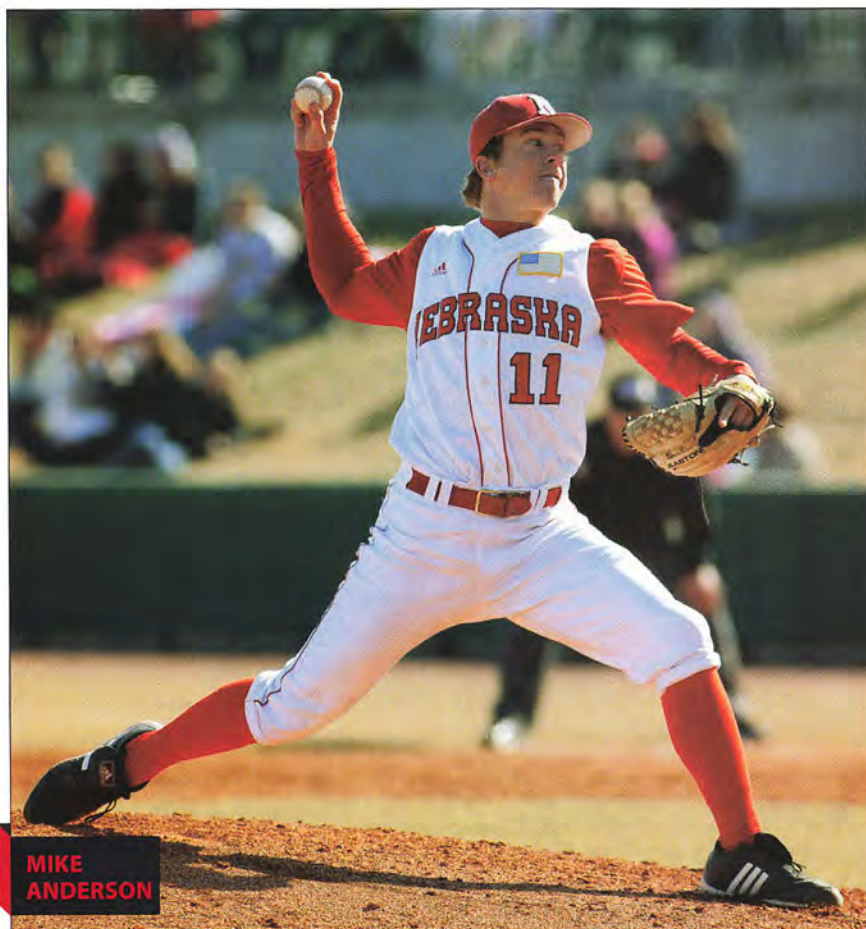


PHOTO BY JOHN PETERSON

## FREEMAN GETS HIS CHANCE

Forget about the spotlight – over his first three-plus seasons pitching for Nebraska's baseball team, Matt Freeman barely even got into the shadows.

After 29 appearances that spanned just 38 1/3 innings, all the senior

from Elkhorn (Neb.) High School had to show for his career was one save and a 5.17 earned-run average, built mostly from throwing in mid-week games.

But after firing six scoreless innings in the opening game of a series against North Dakota on March 18, Freeman stood

with a 3-1 record in 2011, and ridiculously low 0.63 ERA.

He also was tabbed to start in Nebraska's Big 12 Conference-opener at Texas Tech.

"I've seen guys that haven't been major contributors end up coming around and figuring it out and really

## REVELLE EARNS 700TH VICTORY

Rhonda Revelle's softball team accomplished a program first on March 12 when, behind Ashley Hagemann's two-hitter, the Huskers defeated top-ranked Florida 1-0 in Clearwater, Fla.

Earlier in the season, NU lost to then-No. 1 Arizona 6-1.

"That first game with Arizona, we knew we were a better team this year, but we didn't have the momentum we have now," Revelle said. "Now, we're 20 games into it, and we've won a lot of those games."

After playing its first 21 games on the road, NU then gave Revelle her 700th career win by scoring a Bowling Stadium-record 14 runs in the opening game of a March 16 home doubleheader against South Dakota. In her 19th season, Revelle joined former baseball coach John Sanders as the only Nebraska coaches to record 700 wins.





being pretty good, but I don't know if I've ever had anybody be as big or having as drastic a turnaround as what Matt's done," Nebraska pitching coach Eric Newman said. "Credit to him. It's not like he's throwing harder. He's just believing in his ability and not over thinking it. He's pitching."

He's also putting higher expectations on himself.

After allowing North Dakota seven hits, Freeman said, "I didn't feel as comfortable today, but I'm glad I was able to fight through it. If this was my 'bad' game, I can turn that around for next week."

Freeman turned some heads in his second outing this season, when he came in against Northern Colorado and threw shutout ball over a then-career-high 5 1/3 innings to earn his first victory.

Three days later, he made a predetermined three-inning start against Nebraska-Kearney to get another win, and then things really started getting crazy for him.

Teammate Tom Lemke was scratched from a start against then-No. 5 UCLA because of shoulder inflammation, and the next thing Freeman knew he was being inserted in the middle of the weekend rotation. With that opportunity, he allowed just one run in six innings in a game the Huskers won in 12 innings.

With his next start, against Fresno State, he limited the 20th-ranked Bulldogs to a run in

seven innings, suffering the loss only because the Huskers got shut out.

Freeman came to NU as one of the top pitching prospects from the state after leading Elkhorn High to the 2007 Class A championship. He made nine brief appearances for the 2008 Huskers, who had a veteran pitching staff, and then as a sophomore in 2009 got in 14 games before a shoulder injury required him to have surgery in April.

Freeman returned last year but logged just 6 2/3 innings in five games, leaving his role for 2011 up in the air. It was a stint last summer in San Luis Obispo, Calif. – where he compiled a 4-2 record with a 4.26 ERA that included 34 strikeouts to just five walks in 31 2/3 innings – that served as a major stepping stone to Freeman becoming the pitcher he wanted to be.

"I'm glad I stuck it out," said Freeman, acknowledging that he'd thought many times before about ending his career. "I was terrible . . . and now somebody who might be struggling can look at this and see how it can turn around."

Freeman credits Newman for not giving up on him and not making wholesale changes with his mechanics, even when he went through a phase where he struggled to throw the ball 10 feet.

"It was like the yips. I'd throw it straight into the ground,"

## 2011 Baseball Schedule

### TEXAS STATE TOURNAMENT

FEB 18	TEXAS STATE	SAN MARCOS, TX	L, 7-2
FEB 19	AIR FORCE	SAN MARCOS, TX	W, 8-1
FEB 19	WASHINGTON	SAN MARCOS, TX	W, 10-3
FEB 20	MISSOURI STATE	SAN MARCOS, TX	W, 16-4

### BEARKAT TOURNAMENT

FEB 25	N. COLORADO	HUNTSVILLE, TX	W, 12-8
FEB 26	N. COLORADO	HUNTSVILLE, TX	W, 3-0
FEB 26	SAM HOUSTON ST.	HUNTSVILLE, TX	L, 7-1
FEB 27	SAM HOUSTON ST.	HUNTSVILLE, TX	L, 10-9

MAR 02	NEB-KEARNEY	HAWKS FIELD	W, 13-1
MAR 04	UCLA	HAWKS FIELD	L, 1-0 (11)
MAR 05	UCLA	HAWKS FIELD	W, 2-1 (12)
MAR 06	UCLA	HAWKS FIELD	W, 5-4 (11)
MAR 11	FRESNO STATE	HAWKS FIELD	L, 8-5
MAR 12	FRESNO STATE	HAWKS FIELD	L, 1-0
MAR 13	FRESNO STATE	HAWKS FIELD	W, 5-4
MAR 15	SOUTH DAKOTA ST	HAWKS FIELD	W, 8-3
MAR 16	*KANSAS STATE	MANHATTAN, KS	L, 6-5
MAR 18	NORTH DAKOTA	HAWKS FIELD	W, 10-1
MAR 19	NORTH DAKOTA	HAWKS FIELD	W, 6-0
MAR 19	NORTH DAKOTA	HAWKS FIELD	W, 10-4
MAR 20	NORTH DAKOTA	HAWKS FIELD	W, 8-6
MAR 22	N. COLORADO	HAWKS FIELD	W, 5-4
MAR 23	N. COLORADO	HAWKS FIELD	W, 13-2
MAR 25	TEXAS TECH	LUBBOCK, TX	6:30 PM
MAR 26	TEXAS TECH	LUBBOCK, TX	5 PM
MAR 27	TEXAS TECH	LUBBOCK, TX	1 PM
APR 01	OKLAHOMA STATE	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 PM
APR 02	OKLAHOMA STATE	HAWKS FIELD	2:05 PM
APR 03	OKLAHOMA STATE	HAWKS FIELD	1:05 PM
APR 05	CREIGHTON	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 PM
APR 08	KANSAS	LAWRENCE, KS	6 PM
APR 09	KANSAS	LAWRENCE, KS	2 PM
APR 10	KANSAS	LAWRENCE, KS	1 PM
APR 12	WICHITA STATE	WICHITA, KS	6:30 PM
APR 15	KANSAS STATE	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 PM
APR 16	KANSAS STATE	HAWKS FIELD	3:05 PM
APR 17	KANSAS STATE	HAWKS FIELD	1:05 PM
APR 19	CREIGHTON	TD AMERITRADE PARK	6:30 PM
APR 22	OKLAHOMA	NORMAN, OK	6:30 PM
APR 23	OKLAHOMA	NORMAN, OK	2 PM
APR 24	OKLAHOMA	NORMAN, OK	1 PM
APR 26	IOWA	HAWKS FIELD	6:05 PM
APR 29	BAYLOR	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 PM
APR 30	BAYLOR	HAWKS FIELD	2:05 PM
MAY 01	BAYLOR	HAWKS FIELD	1:05 PM
MAY 06	TEXAS	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 PM
MAY 07	TEXAS	HAWKS FIELD	2:05 PM
MAY 08	TEXAS	HAWKS FIELD	1:05 PM
MAY 10	CREIGHTON	TD AMERITRADE PARK	7 PM
MAY 13	TEXAS A&M	COLLEGE STATION, TX	6:35 PM
MAY 14	TEXAS A&M	COLLEGE STATION, TX	2:05 PM
MAY 15	TEXAS A&M	COLLEGE STATION, TX	1:05 PM
MAY 19	MISSOURI	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 PM
MAY 20	MISSOURI	HAWKS FIELD	6:35 PM
MAY 21	MISSOURI	HAWKS FIELD	2:05 PM

### BIG 12 TOURNAMENT

MAY 25-29	OKLAHOMA CITY, OK	TBA
NCAA REGIONALS	CAMPUS SITES	TBA
JUN 03-05		
NCAA SUPER REGIONALS	CAMPUS SITES	TBA
JUNE 10-13		
COLLEGE WORLD SERIES	TD AMERITRADE PARK	TBA
JUNE 18-29		

\* NOT A BIG 12 CONFERENCE GAME



said Freeman, who recognized he had a mental block and began working with a sports psychologist. "I still fight that stuff all the time, but I accept and know how to work through it now."

### Gymnastics wins Big 12

The women's gymnastics team entered NCAA regional competition on the heels of its first Big 12 Championship since 2007. Coach Dan Kendig's squad knocked off three-time defending champion Oklahoma in the meet at Columbia, Mo.

NU's Erin Davis earned a share of the floor title and won the vault en route to being honored as the first Big 12 Event Specialist of the Year.

### Bowling shoots for NCAA title

The women's bowling team also won their final competition before the NCAA

championships by claiming the Music City Invitational in Smyrna, Tenn., on March 20. The Huskers will be shooting for their second NCAA crown in three years April 14-16 at Detroit.

### Women's track locks up final Big 12 title

The women's track and field team won its sixth Big 12 indoor title by knocking off defending NCAA champion Texas A&M at the Bob Devaney Sports Center on Feb. 25-26.

Natalie Willer set a meet record and personal best while winning the pole vault at 14 feet, 4 inches. NU's Chantae McMillan won the pentathlon, while Mara Griva took the triple and long jumps.

The men's team finished third. Luke Pinkelman won the shot put with a personal-best 65 feet, 10 1/4 inches.



**WOMEN'S  
TRACK AND FIELD**

PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK

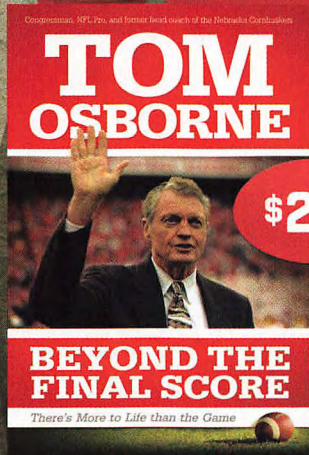
## 2010-11 WBB Schedule

OCT 31	PITTSBURG ST. (EXH.)	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 78-60
NOV 07	NEB.-KEARNEY (EXH.)	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 97-55
NOV 13	VERMONT	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 95-38
NOV 17	MIAMI	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 99-85
NOV 20	SAINT MARY'S	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 64-63
NOV 22	WASHINGTON ST.	AT PULLMAN, WASH.	W, 87-79
NOV 26	NEB.-OMAHA	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 80-44
NOV 30	UNLV	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 65-41
DEC 05	INDIANA	AT BLOOMINGTON	L, 67-61
DEC 08	CREIGHTON	AT OMAHA, NEB.	W, 63-57
DEC 11	NO. COLORADO	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 66-53
DUEL IN THE DESERT			
DEC 18	HOUSTON	AT LAS VEGAS, NEV.	L, 79-70
DEC 19	MARIST	AT LAS VEGAS, NEV.	L, 65-60
DEC 20	LOUISVILLE	AT LAS VEGAS, NEV.	L, 65-51
DEC 30	SOUTH FLORIDA	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 78-59
JAN 02	FLORIDA A&M	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 73-57
JAN 08	OKLAHOMA *	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 70-50
JAN 11	IOWA STATE *	AT AMES, IOWA	L, 64-43
JAN 16	KANSAS *	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 75-61 (OT)
JAN 22	KANSAS STATE *	AT MANHATTAN, KAN.	L, 64-37
JAN 26	IOWA STATE *	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 85-66
JAN 29	TEXAS TECH *	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 56-53
FEB 02	MISSOURI *	AT COLUMBIA, MO.	L, 76-69
FEB 06	COLORADO *	AT BOULDER, COLO.	L, 70-45
FEB 09	BAYLOR *	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 69-45
FEB 12	OKLAHOMA STATE *	AT STILLWATER, OKLA.	L, 80-57
FEB 15	TEXAS *	AT AUSTIN, TEXAS	L, 67-55
FEB 19	KANSAS STATE *	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 69-64
FEB 22	MISSOURI *	DEVANEY CENTER	W, 6-34
FEB 26	KANSAS *	AT LAWRENCE, KAN.	L, 77-61
MAR 02	COLORADO *	DEVANEY CENTER	L, 64-61
MAR 05	TEXAS A&M *	AT COLL. STATION, TEXAS	L, 84-49
MAR 08	IOWA STATE ^	AT KANSAS CITY	L, 69-61
* BIG 12 CONFERENCE GAME      ^ PHILLIPS 66 BIG 12 TOURNAMENT			



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# FROM THE ARCHIVES

## IN YOUR FACE

Erick Strickland was named to the All-Big Eight Defensive Team three times. And he finished his career with a Cornhusker-record 257 steals. He also ranked third all-time in assists (a statistical category that has been kept only since 1974). But he was no less exciting at the offensive end of the court, ranking sixth on Nebraska's all-time points list when he finished his career in the 1995-96 season, the Huskers' last in the Big Eight. Strickland scored two of his 1,586 career points with a dramatic dunk (shown here) during an 82-59 victory against Georgia Southern in the first round of the Ameritas Classic in early December of 1995. Despite going 4-10 in the conference, including nine consecutive losses, Nebraska won the National Invitation Tournament, defeating Colorado State, Washington State and Fresno State to earn the trip to Madison Square Garden, where it defeated Tulane (90-78) and St. Joseph's (60-56). Strickland scored 33 points in the two games in New York City and received the NIT MVP award.











ERIC CROUCH

## GAMES REMEMBERED

# Irish returns nearly cost NU

*Nebraska overcame two kick returns for touchdowns with Eric Crouch's overtime heroics in classic battle*

**THE IMPORTANCE** of special teams was never more apparent than on the 80-degree afternoon at Notre Dame Stadium, awash in red. Nebraska's defense contained coach Bob Davie's Fighting Irish, allowing only 224 total yards and 11 first downs. But a pair of kick returns almost cost the No. 1-ranked Huskers.

The first came with 8:30 remaining in the third quarter, after Nebraska had taken a 21-7 lead, when Notre Dame's Julius Jones returned the ensuing

kickoff 100 yards for a touchdown.

The second came barely 2 minutes into the fourth quarter, when Joey Getherall returned a punt 83 yards, also for a touchdown that would tie the score and ultimately force overtime.

Jeremy Slechta and Eric Crouch stepped up for the Huskers in the overtime. Slechta's sack of Notre Dame quarterback Arnaz Battle on third-and-goal from the Nebraska 4-yard line forced the Irish to kick a field goal, and Crouch completed

a 9-yard pass to tight end Tracy Wistrom on third-and-9 from the Notre Dame 24-yard line before running (on a second-down play) for the winning touchdown.

If not for the pass completion, Crouch's seventh in 15 attempts with one interception and three sacks, Nebraska would have needed a Josh Brown field goal in order to play another overtime.

**FRANK SOLICH:** "If you can get people out in front of Eric Crouch, you probably have a chance."

## NEBRASKA 27, NOTRE DAME 24 (OT)

Sept. 9, 2000 • South Bend, Ind.

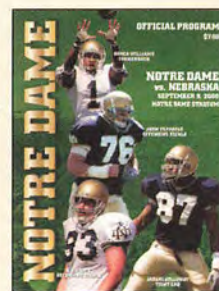
Nebraska	7	7	7	0	6	-	27
Notre Dame	0	7	7	7	3	-	24

- (N) Eric Crouch 62 run (Josh Brown kick)
- (ND) Tony Fisher 2 run (Nick Setta kick)
- (N) Crouch 1 run (Brown kick)
- (N) Dan Alexander 28 run (Brown kick)
- (ND) Julius Jones 100 kickoff return (Setta kick)
- (ND) Joey Getherall 83 punt return (Setta kick)
- (ND) Setta 29 field goal
- (N) Crouch 7 run

Attendance: 80,232

## DO YOU REMEMBER?

- ▶ An estimated 20,000 to 25,000 Husker fans were part of the record-tying, capacity crowd at Notre Dame Stadium, even though Nebraska's ticket allotment was only 4,000.
  - ▶ The sellout was Notre Dame's 151st in a row and its 199th in the previous 200 games.
  - ▶ Notre Dame issued a record 821 media credentials.
  - ▶ Nebraska took a 14-7 lead in the second quarter with a 15-play, 65-yard drive that used 8 minutes, 20 seconds. Fourteen of the 15 plays were rushes, vintage Husker football.
  - ▶ The victory was Nebraska's eighth in a row dating to the previous season. Five of the eight were against ranked opponents.
- Notre Dame was No. 23 in the AP poll.





# CROSSWORD & TRIVIA

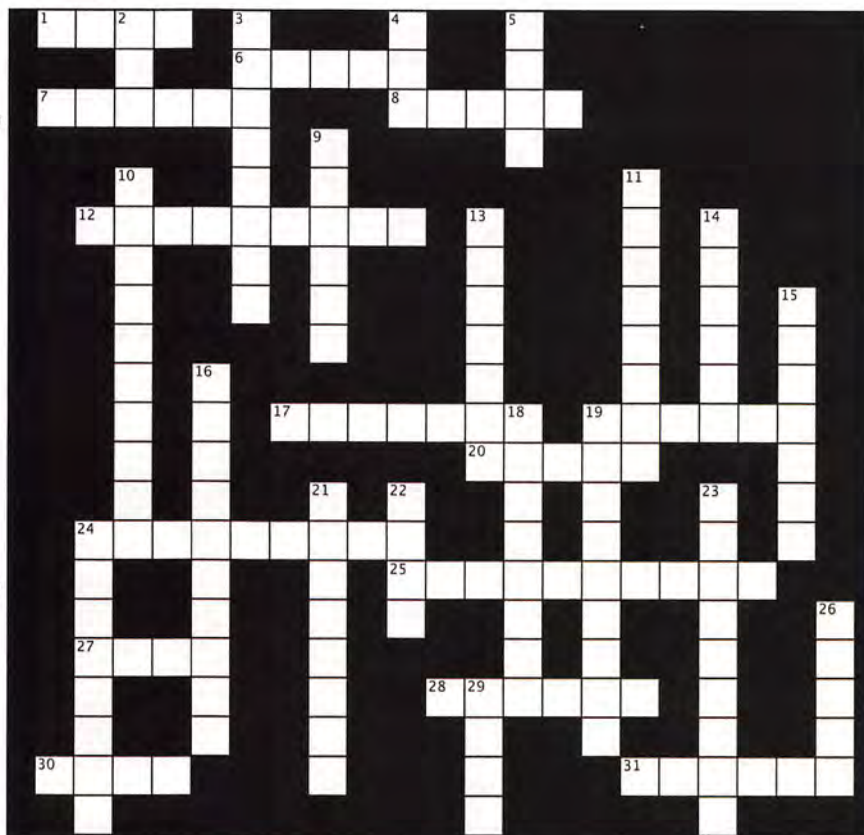
## ACROSS

1. Caught 8 touchdown passes in 2010
6. Defensive back who played as true freshman in 2010
7. Receiver coach
8. 2010 leader in sacks
12. Offensive lineman who played as true freshman in 2010
17. 2011 non-conference opponent
19. Former offensive coordinator
20. 2010 leader in tackles
24. Nov. 12 opponent
25. Taylor Martinez's home state
27. 2012 non-conference opponent
28. 2010 leading receiver
30. Head coach before Bo
31. Defensive lineman moving to offensive line

## DOWN

2. Linebackers coach
3. Defensive end missing spring practice with injury
4. Ted Gilmore's new school
5. Offensive coordinator
9. Receiver who played as true freshman in 2010
10. Shawn Watson's new school
11. Ran for 7 touchdowns and passed for 3 in 2010
13. Defensive backs coach
14. Offensive lineman missing spring practice with injury
15. Wears No. 15
16. April 16 event
18. Tight ends coach
19. Opponent in 2011 Big Ten opener
21. 1971 Outland Trophy winner
22. Quarterback coach
23. Oct. 8 opponent
24. Recruiting coordinator
26. Running backs coach
29. Nov. 25 opponent


Answers will appear in the May issue.



## HUSKERNUTZ



NEBRASKANS DIFFER AS TO WHEN SPRING OFFICIALLY ARRIVES IN HUSKER NATION.

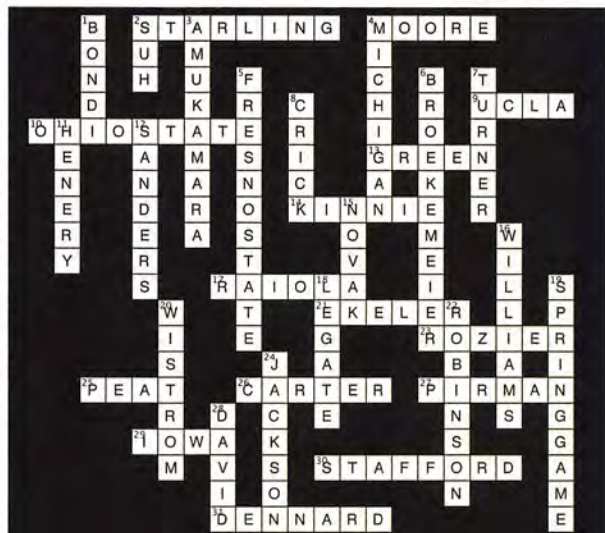


## BRAIN BUSTER

**What season was this?**  
**The Huskers led the nation in total defense and passing defense and ranked third in scoring defense. All America middle guard Wayne Meylan set the school single-season record for tackles with 119. The starting quarterback was Frank Patrick, the leading rusher Dick Davis. The Huskers did not play in a bowl game.**  
*Answer will appear in our next issue*

**MARCH ANSWER:** Dahrran Diedrick

## MARCH SOLUTION





# Loss of Hagg changes personnel, not base defense

BY MIKE BABCOCK

**I'VE RELATED THIS BEFORE**, no doubt. Bob Devaney's practices were open to reporters. It didn't matter, he said, since sports writers weren't smart enough to know what was going on, anyway.

Bob would have been right in my case. And I'm only speaking for myself.

When it comes to X's and O's, I tread lightly. Sure, I can toss around catch phrases such as "zone read" and "peso," much-used around here the last couple of seasons. But I'm hard-pressed to understand the basics of such things, much less the intricacies.

I don't study enough film (or digital video now, I suppose), nor would I necessarily know what to look for, unless, say, Woody Allen had written and/or directed it.

In any case, I acknowledge my limitations here because what follows might be further evidence of ignorance rather than insight. But I don't think so.

Eric Hagg was among those who played their final game at Nebraska in the Holiday Bowl and must be replaced, a process that is underway this spring. Hagg's loss was particularly significant because of his versatility, which led to the creation of the "peso."

You remember the assigning of the name "peso," right? It was based on the misconception that "peso" meant "five" in Spanish, when, in fact, the Spanish word is "cinco."

The "peso" concept was what mattered, though. And Hagg became the "peso," which depended on his skill set. He was big enough and strong enough to play linebacker and fast enough, with coverage ability, to play nickel back (and yes, "peso" is a Spanish monetary unit).

The most discussed subject this spring has been the restructured offense, of course. But the continued evolution of the defense is no less important as the Huskers prepare for their first season in the Big Ten. And the loss of players such as Hagg, as well as dime back DeJon Gomes, cornerback Prince Amukamara and defensive end Pierre Allen must be addressed.



**"Devaney's practices were open to reporters... since sports writers weren't smart enough to know what was going on, anyway."**

During Nebraska's pre-spring news conference, defensive coordinator Carl Pelini was asked if there were players who could replace Hagg. Yes, he said, but "you've got to come up with your base first, your 11 best, who you feel best with in each personnel grouping, and then from there, you say: Do you have a nickel outside of that group who could be really good in that 'peso,' nickel role?"

This is where my limited understanding of football's X's and O's might come into play, though I don't think so. In asking a question, someone referred to the peso as Nebraska's base defense.

Pelini laughed. "The peso wasn't our base defense. All the peso was, was a personnel package. That's it," he said. "We just chose to play Eric because we didn't want to see one of our best players come off the field. But our playbook doesn't change when we're in peso or when we're in base.

"It's just who's playing that position. Do you want a bigger, stouter, more run-stopper, who maybe doesn't quite give you the coverage freedom as Eric did? Or do you want a nickel in there who gives you a lot more freedom coverage-wise but you've got to protect a little bit in run support? But in terms of what I would call doesn't change. It's the same exact run fits. It's the same defense."

Hagg was among the Huskers' best 11 on defense. He started every game because he could play the run as well as cover the pass. Without such versatility, the defense would have had to substitute a linebacker in certain situations. But he moved up and became the linebacker.

Given the fast-paced, no-huddle offenses commonplace now, the less substitution the better. Time is of the essence, which makes defenders such as Hagg and Gomes so valuable.

That's how I see it, anyway, though I admit, I don't understand X's and O's. **N**



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